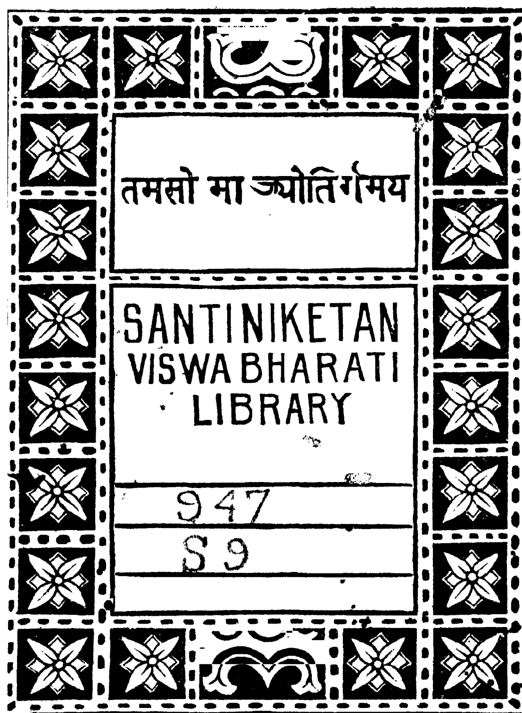


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THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY

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TWO YEARS OF RUSSIA'S NEW LIFE

BY ANNA LOUISE STRONG
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WITH A PREFACE BY
L. TROTSKY



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PREFACE

Of the October Revolution and of Soviet Russia there is already a large literature. On account of the very character of the revolutionary epoch, each new book has characterized, with good will or with malice, a new step in the rapid course of revolutionary development.

There exist not a few books devoted to our civil war. Some of them paint our cruelty and bloodthirstiness; others tell of the heroism of the workers' vanguard, of the unexampled self-sacrifice of the toilers in the struggle for great new aims. Undoubtedly the breadth of the revolutionary struggle, its great sacrifices, have attracted to the cause of the Russian Revolution the sympathies not only of the toiling masses, but also of the better elements in the intellectual classes.

It is, however, necessary to state that the sympathies of these latter have not always proved stable. More than once we have observed that the very persons and groups among the intellectuals who accepted the Revolution but sighed on account of her cruelties and destructive influence on culture, yet felt themselves not only injured but somewhat insulted when the Revolution went over to the insistent drudgery of daily effort;—from the heights of tragic poetry they, don't you see, were thrown down to the prosaic depths of the NEP. (New Economic Policy.)

The trouble is that the ethical-æsthetic standard by which is guided a considerable, and not the worst, part of the intellectuals, is entirely unfit for the grasping of great historic events. History is not at all guided in its movements by the rules of morals and beauty; it follows the logic of its inherent forces, the classes and material factors underlying the bases of all society. Ethics and æsthetics are already phenomena of second or third place. The new class, in the severe struggle towards a new epoch of history, by that very struggle lays down paths to new ethics and æsthetics.

"Alas! alas!" exclaim some of the injured "friends" in Russia, "behold the unlimited reign of Tsar Nep. Where is the tragic and bleeding Russia of 1918, 1919 and 1920?"

The author of the present book, Anna Louise Strong, does not belong to the number of such "friends." She approached the Revolution not from the æsthetic, or contemplative point of view, but from the point of view of action. Under the prose of the Nep, as well as under the dramatic events of the civil war, she was able to see, or perhaps at the very beginning, merely to feel,—the intense, stubborn, uncompromising struggle against age-long slavery, darkness, barbarism for new higher forms of life. When the Volga was stricken by famine, Miss Strong arrived in Russia for the difficult, dangerous struggle with hunger and epidemics. She herself went through typhus. In her numerous articles and correspondence, she tirelessly made breaches in that wall of reactionary lies that made

the most important part of the imperialistic blockade around the Revolution. This does not mean, of course, that Miss Strong was hiding the black spots; but she tried to understand and explain to others how these facts grew out of the past in its conflict with the future.

Thanks to such an approach, the only correct one, the NEP for the author of this book is not vulgar prose, and not a liquidation of the Revolution, but one of its necessary stages. The very people who fought on all the fronts of the civil war,—except, of course, for the tens of thousands who fell victims to French, English and American imperialism,—are working for the economic restoration of the country, in the name of the same aims, with the same energy, the same readiness to give themselves completely. The difficulties here are truly incredible, our economic and cultural backwardness is immeasurable, but a knowledge of our own backwardness, when it takes hold of the wide masses of the people, becomes in itself the greatest force towards culture. This force has been awakened by the Revolution. We have it, and on it we are building. One of the stages of our building, not infrequently mistaken, often awkward, but historically unconquerable,—Anna Louise Strong shows in her book. That is why we think it has a right to attention.

L. Trotsky.

Moscow, 1923.

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HOW RUSSIA IS "DIFFERENT"

I HAVE had typhus in Russia. Four months of the first five I spent there were on a sickbed, and the rest in a dirty, sprawling city in the famine area where the world was dying. Yet I loved the country and when my convalescence in England was over, I wanted to go back. Naturally my friends asked, Why? Why do you love Russia?

It was not easy to answer. Was it for fine scenery? There are great mountains and noble forests in Russia, but the scenery I knew was a barren, curving plain, set with draggled, hungry villages.

Was it for comfort of living? In all those first five months I never tasted the freshness of cold water, nothing but dull, boiled water even in illness. I never enjoyed fresh milk, but only boiled milk, or milk from a can. In my trips out to villages, I slept on floors of peasant cottages; during my brief days in Moscow, I carried my water for washing up three flights of stairs to my room.

When I went to file my telegrams at night in the Foreign Office, I took a pocket electric lamp with me, to avoid falling into the holes in the sidewalks

and streets. After my lamp wore out, I felt my way carefully, for there were no more lamps to be bought in Russia.

Was it the people I met? In those first months I knew no big people. I knew nurses and doctors and relief workers and peasants and serving maids and minor officials. What was there in these to make me want to go back?

Picture after flashing picture I remember of those first days in Russia. The Red Army soldier standing on the platform at Minsk, barefoot, holding his rifle by a piece of rope. The Polish official in our train sneered at him as we passed, but I remembered that we also in America had had our Valley Forge.

The boy and the girl who entered our train, members of the League of Communist Youth, taking collections for the famine. The boy had no hat and no shoes; under his shirt and trousers of home-made linen it was clear that he wore no underwear. Yet he held himself with dignity, presenting proper credentials from the city. He was asking nothing for himself, for with his ration of black bread it did not occur to him that he needed anything. He was asking for the victims of the famine.

Dunia, the housemaid in the Quaker flat where I lay ill in Moscow. No beauty of face or form was in Dunia; she was squat and shabby, with draggled shoes and tangled hair. Yet she brought joy into monotonous days; even the bringing of a glass of water was a game of friendliness with her. She was too simple in heart to know much of politics; but she sang little songs about speculators to herself

in the kitchen, and about how the workers' soviets put them down.

There was the Cheka worker whom I met on the railway, going up and down Russia, hunting out graft and counter-revolution. All his worldly goods were in his knapsack: a loaf of bread, a teapot, and under these a couple of handkerchiefs and a pair of socks. And two hand-embroidered linen towels, brought from home long ago. I admired them and he insisted on giving me one. What did he need of two? he said.

The little East-side Jew whom I met in Samara, the heart of the famine, and who went with me as interpreter to organize village kitchens. Speaking English with a vile accent and physically most unattractive. Then I learned that he was manager of two little factories which had just reopened, making doors and windows for the repairing of Samara. He was a machinist; he was so proud of the two or three machines he had put together, down in a country where even plain nails were not to be had. Proudest of all he was of the wages of his workers, since he had succeeded in getting the government to put them on piece work. Fifteen dollars a month they got, with board and lodging. He himself, as manager, got rations and lodging, but without the fifteen dollars. For he was Communist, on Communist wages, which at that time were a few cents a month, not worth standing in line to collect. His wife worked also, his children were fed in a government children's home; but he was eager and energetic and happy to be building Russia.

Puriaieff, chairman of the peasant relief committee, in the village of Novo Semekino, is another whom I remember. Is he alive or dead now from the famine? Tall, and thin and keen, with circles under his eyes from hunger, he refused my proffered bread till he knew I had plenty; then he accepted a chunk to put in his pocket,—to divide at home with his sister and sister's children.

There were red army officers I knew, in training in the highest military school of Moscow. They had divided their rations so that every five men were supporting one Volga child. These children were all collected in one children's home in Moscow, and the young officers, who themselves had nothing but clothes and rations, went over in spare moments to play with the youngsters.

There is so much horror I remember, and so much heroism. The young peasant girl of eighteen who acted as nurse to me in Samara. Born in a German colony on the Volga, she had lived in America eight years and learned to speak English. She was secured to tend me, since everyone else spoke Russian. Somewhere down in the south she had left a family, starving; a father, who was a skilled carpenter and farmer, a mother who was a careful housewife, brothers and sisters who were waiting to hear if she found food. But she had found nothing; the trains were too crowded; she could not even get out of Samara; and now winter had come and she had no coat to go outdoors. She could only wait for spring while her family also waited, two hundred miles to the south in a dying village.

We also waited once, in the Quaker flat in Moscow, waited a whole week for a train that did not arrive from the famine. A passenger of our own was on it; it was the fast express from Tashkent, delayed for a week by blizzards. Then one unforgetable midnight I was awakened by voices, and went hurriedly into the next room to hear what had happened.

Behind a wall of snow and blizzard they had waited, unable to move forward or backward, unable for a whole day to go out of the train. Their locomotive went for help and was also blocked in snowdrifts. Their food gave out and they had not even water; there was no wood for melting even the snow. They marched through the night to dig out their locomotive, and two men died from exhaustion.

Typhus appeared and a car was set aside for isolation. Ice-plows came and a train-load of soldiers dug them out. As they left the famine region and drew near home, they began singing, the sick ones from their berths and the well ones stamping up and down the corridors to keep warm. Silly little songs, folk songs, songs of revolution. So they pulled into Moscow, the fast train, the government express, the train that was specially favored, with two dead, and twenty in the typhus isolation car and all the rest of them, sick and well, shouting and singing.

These were the things that drew me back to Russia, which I saw first in its utterly darkest days. The heroism, the sacrifice, the comradeship, and the joy

that went with it. The joy of pioneers who, in the midst of hardship, exult to believe that they are creating something new.

I, too, had this sense that something new was being created. Something that had never been before in human history. I wanted to have a share in it, I wanted at least to understand it. Was it only the comradeship and joy of battle that always come to compensate for bitter times of struggle? Was it only the fellowship of suffering? Or was it really something new in the world?

* * * * * *

When I went back in the summer of 1922, it was already to a recovering Russia, which week by week changed rapidly under my sight. In the famine year when I entered, I brought food and bedding with me, and prepared for disinfection at the journey's end. Now, on the fast through trains, there was a struggling attempt to furnish blankets to those who had none, though clean sheets were not yet available for all comers. I received a single sheet in my sleeping-car compartment; it appeared to have been washed but not ironed.

By midsummer all the correspondents were taking side-trips from Moscow. The Health Department patrolled the railways well. There were regions where one could not buy a ticket without inoculation against cholera, but week by week these regions were cleaned up and the restrictions removed. You could go down to Nijni Novgorod to see the world-famous fair, in a good sleeping-car each way, or, if you chose, by airplane. My friends, Russian as well

as foreign, were taking vacations to the Crimea and Caucasus. The Siberian Express had been re-established and was putting on a dining-car.

In the autumn I went on a trip to the Arctic Circle, visiting mines and sawmills. The trains in this far north were slow and crowded and dirty, but they ran on definite schedule and arrived on time. On the main line, from Petrograd to Moscow, one could not ask for better service. I made the trip four times in six weeks, once in a diplomatic car and three times in ordinary "cars with soft seats" reserved for sleeping. In the diplomatic car I had the luxury of private coupé and lavatory, with tea served morning and evening by a most comradely car convoyer, who refused tips but accepted friendly gifts of cigarettes. Even the ordinary cars now furnished clean sheets and good blankets. There were eight or ten such cars on the train, running every night between the two cities.

All over Moscow there was a fury of repairing. Along the streets I had to turn out on every block for the repaving of sidewalks, or to dodge the splashing paint from the buildings that were being freshened. My days of work in the hotel room went on to the rasping sound of iron on stone, as they tore up and repaired the hotel corridors. In that one first summer, from April to August, Moscow repaired 100,000 square yards of cobblestone pavements and 10,000 square yards of sidewalks; she repaired six broken bridges and let contracts for forty-two others. She doubled the number of street cars and made line extensions.

They also planted,—a typically Russian touch,—120,000 square yards of flower-beds in the city's open squares and boulevards. In and out among these there were children playing, and young men and girls strolling late into the summer evenings. On all the street corners were flowers for sale, and cigarettes and little bread-rolls.

Everyone was rejoicing in having much more to eat. Week by week, through the summer, the standard of living improved. I shared an apartment for three months with people high up in the Government Publishing House. In June, the little gifts of white flour and sugar jam, bought in the American Commissary by virtue of my citizenship, were hailed with shouts of delight and made the occasion for a celebrating party. By August these things were tame additions to the food supply, not worth an extra trip to get. In June my hostess and her sisters were borrowing my old clothes on various occasions; we nearly fought over who should wear a raincoat of ancient pattern. By August they were going on vacations to Berlin and had more clothes than I had, since they had restocked after eight lean years.

All through the northern provinces, under the Arctic Circle, where the cool summer made their own harvest a total failure, they were yet rejoicing in having at last enough to eat. Their timber industry had opened, and the central government had lent them food in return for the promise of timber, which they had already cut and were sawing for the foreign market.

By "enough" they meant that at last they had one good meal a day, about five o'clock, otherwise tea and bread in the morning and late at night. This was still "enough," anywhere in Russia. Only the following spring, when I went south through the Ukraine, did I begin to see such things as eggs for breakfast. "But last year," exulted an Englishwoman married to an official in the far north, "last year we had a piece of bread and one herring as our daily ration. Now I can give my husband a really decent meal."

Last year a ration of three pounds of oats per week kept the workers alive in Karelia; but now they were drawing regular wages of sixteen pounds of flour daily, or its equivalent in bacon, tea and clothes. In the winter they were going on a money wage. This had already been standard in Moscow for some months, which was no longer a besieged fortress sharing its last food, but a city with trade relations and a market. The money wage spread more slowly to distant provinces, where bread was still a more useful commodity than money.

Improvements in individual factories were occurring so fast that summer that in June I met a workman who had left a certain automobile factory because they did not give him enough to eat; and in August I met others from the same factory who had plenty to eat and were blowing in money on summer theatres.

I remember the little seamstress who made for me two coats, a fur coat in the first winter and a linen coat the following summer. In the winter of th

famine she charged me with fear and trembling less than four dollars for making and lining a complete fur coat. She was so eager to get the work that she sat up till three in the morning to finish it soon and get her pay. She was pathetically anxious for more work and when I told her she ought to charge more, she misunderstood my Russian and protested that she would not think of overcharging. She was on the edge of starvation.

When I visited her four months later she was a different woman. I asked for a linen coat and she replied cheerfully that she could do it for me in a fortnight at a cost of ten dollars. Her room was full of orders and she did not tremble when she mentioned her price. Work had come back and a chance to make a living, with the return of the reconstructive activities of peace.

So clear was the improvement in everyone's living conditions that in the December elections of that year the Communist Party based their election speeches on it. They told what their plans had been and how they had carried them out, and ended: "Look in your own pay-envelope and decide whether you are better off this year than last." . . . The Communists got a larger percentage of the votes than at any time before. The first session of the Moscow Soviet, which is a city and state government at once, showed nobody protesting against their programme, as had been the case a year before.

The Communist Party was more firmly in power than ever before,—but how much of their Communism was left? In all the details of life, Russia

has made a great stride towards capitalism. Wages are paid in money instead of rations, industry must support itself without drawing from the government funds, shops of private trade are open everywhere, newspapers are full of advertisements, sables and diamonds of "speculators" appear in theatres and cafés, and the new-rich secure apartments of several rooms, while ordinary folk crowd into small bare quarters.

What was left of the equal sharing of the days of war? Was it all just a dream, a communism of poverty which failed? Old friends of the Revolution came back, were shocked at the high prices and fury of speculation in Moscow, and sighed for the lost idyllic days of revolutionary fervour and common division of food. "There is no communism left," they cried.

Foreign businessmen came in to negotiate for concessions. They declared cheerfully that there was no communism left, nothing but a few temporary hang-overs in the way of government interference with foreign trade. Foreign correspondents and relief workers agreed; Russia was tired of communism, they said; it had failed; she had made the first step towards capitalism and was going back to "normalcy" as fast as possible.

It is admitted on all sides; there is no communism in Russia. But the Communists go farther. They say there never was any communism. They say they are farther on the road towards it than ever before; that they are going towards it step by step through the decades. They say that the equal shar-

ing and sacrifice that marked the dark days of war and famine was not communism at all, but merely the necessary war tactics of a besieged city.

They say it is only now, with the coming of peace and the chance to reconstruct, that they are beginning to build communism. They are building according to plans discussed widely and known throughout Russia. It will take years and decades and even generations; but they expect to hold power in Russia for all that time—to build it. No other governing party in the world expects to keep power more than one or two terms of office. But the Communists of Russia, with elections held yearly, expect to carry through plans over a generation.

There will be many mistakes, and graft, and inefficiency. These things everyone knows; they are not hid in Russia. Some mistakes will be due to the backwardness of Russia, the old habits of bribery and laziness in office. Mistakes will also be due to the greatness of the job they have undertaken. For what they are building is something new in history.

That is the claim they make. As a foreigner goes through the streets of Moscow, or down through the great plains of Russia, he sees, at first, little to prove this claim. One marks no outer difference between Moscow and other cities, except the glittering domes of gold and the exquisite domes of blue that cut the heavens, and that tell that Europe is left behind and Asia approaches. The crowds in the streets are more Asian in appearance, with costumes from the Caucasus and from Turkestan. There are swarthy Tartar faces mingled with Rus-

sian; there are crooked, cobblestone streets; there is the glory of the Red Square and the Kremlin.

In these things Moscow is, as always, different from Europe. But in other things,—the streets are full of shops with bread and cotton cloth and jewels; the markets are crowded with peasants selling produce; there are great banks with men and women going in to cash checks and draw money. If you read the papers you notice perhaps that the Sugar Trust has been profiteering. You are quite certain that your hotel is profiteering; you know that by the price it charges for meagre accommodation.

State trusts, private traders, peasants,—everyone is out to make money. So life is everywhere, so is it here. It is especially so in the life that is seen by the foreigner; his life is held in a narrow round of cafés, hotels and business places. He sees chiefly two classes of people: government officials, frequently bureaucratic and tangled in red tape; private profit-makers seeking special privilege and concessions, making money in legitimate and illegitimate ways. He hears rumours of graft and sometimes runs across it. Russia, he concludes, is still a backward, semi-Oriental land, lazy, ready to be corrupted.

Yes, Russia is all that. But as you live longer in Russia, and begin to meet workers and students and managers of industry, you notice other things. Not so obvious, but very important.

I went from Moscow to Petrograd. I looked out of my car window on the way and saw a train of cars, newly painted, shining cars in olive green.

On the side of those cars, in addition to the usual number, was a design and a motto, with words about the First of May.

Those cars were made by the car-builders, not in their ordinary working-time, but on Sundays and evenings and holidays. They were made as a free gift by Russian workers for the needs of Russian Railroads. They were presented to the government at a May-Day festival. As long as they last they will go up and down the land, carrying passengers, and shouting aloud to everyone who sees them that the railroad workers cared enough about transport to make these cars for nothing, as a present in a celebration. . . .

Is there any other land in the world where that could happen? As I go through the streets of Moscow I see also occasional street-cars, decorated with gorgeous paint and many mottoes. "Red October" is the name of one of these cars; "Lenin" is another. These also were free gifts from the street-car workers to the city of Moscow.

Another unusual incident happens. A group of weavers from a textile factory suddenly decide to make a call on Trotsky, the head of the army. They present him with a banner. They say to him:

"To our dear comrade Trotsky: You with your bayonet guard the gains of the revolution, while we with our shuttles weave the shining web of socialism." . . . Then they give him a pay-book and pay-number with the remark: "The workers of this factory enter you up, Comrade Trotsky, as a red weaver, and bring you your pay-book and pay-num-

ber." Trotsky embraces and kisses the delegates. Thereafter he is Honorary Red Weaver of that factory; his shift of work is done by glad volunteers in turn, and his wage envelope is turned over to the children's home in which the factory is interested.

There is nothing new that citizens should pay tribute to a popular military leader. But that they should think they honour him by making him a "Weaver,"—that seems like something new. That they should promise to weave with their shuttles the web of socialism,—that indicates that they think they are doing something. Something besides just making cotton goods in a factory. Something that other workers, elsewhere in the world, don't think they are weaving.

Another incident. The biggest newspaper in Moscow holds a contest, running for many weeks, to determine who are the best managers of industry in Russia. Imagine that for a moment in New York, and you will see how strange it is. A newspaper contest to see whether Rockefeller or Gary or some small factory-manager in Pennsylvania is the "best director." The letters come in from workers under these managers. Other workers answer back, and discuss for and against the efficiency of their boss.

In the end there are twelve who are chosen. A banquet in Moscow is given in their honour. They receive the "Red Banner of Toil" from the government, because they have done so much to help build Communism. The workers' letters also reveal a

few especially bad managers; these are investigated and two of them are fired.

This is something new in industry; but equally striking are the standards used by the workers in judging their directors. It shows what is demanded of factory managers in Russia.

"Our factory was only working part-time," writes one worker. "Once it stopped for eleven months altogether; after that it produced only half of pre-war. Then Archangelsk,—he came. The workers say of him: 'He runs forth like the wind, blowing away disorganisation.' With just words he enthused and united us. He introduced order. He rapidly brought production to 120 per cent. pre-war.

"Comrade Archangelsk does not spare his physical or mental energy for his factory workers. For ten months we see that every day our life becomes better. He repaired housing and the bedrooms of the workers. He repaired the bath-house. He repaired and painted the roofs of the factory and the workers' houses. He improved the co-operative stock-farm. He has arranged courses of general instructions for the factory youth, and himself lectures on technical questions."

Here is another prize-winner, manager of a mine in the Donetz. His workers write of him: "He received the mines in bad condition, condemned to destruction. He brought electricity four miles through frozen earth and operated the machines by it; he replaced the horses by an electric railway. Thanks to him we averted destruction and even increased

output, and thus started the gas and coke ovens and chemical mills." . . . Is there any other land in the world where they talk so poetically of mining?

Uhanof, manager of the great Dynamo works in Moscow, was another prize-winner. His workers wrote: "When Comrade Uhanof says it, the workers know it will happen. He creates an atmosphere not of slave-like drive, but a critical, businesslike attitude of brotherly responsibility. . . . When the new economic policy was started, he said: 'Not a single spider will get into Simonovka.' He organised with us a co-operative tea-room and dining-room and bakery and grocery. None of these private profiteers can flourish out our way."

Workers who write thus about their bosses are something new. The fact that they write at all is new; the standards they apply are new. These standards indicate that the workers and the directors are working together to accomplish something which all of them want, something not primarily concerned with wages or hours or the usual matters of conflict in industries outside Russia. What is this goal they strive for together? It is clear from the comments. A rebuilt industry; increasing production; order and organisation and efficiency; based on these, a good life and education for the workers. Yes,—and something more. The crowding out of all the private business men, through co-operative groceries, bakeries, tea-rooms.

The workers and these bosses are evidently leagued together to build up state-owned industry and co-operative industry and to compete out of

existence private business. They are trying to do it by work. It is the same thing that the weavers meant when they promised to weave with their shuttles the shining web of socialism.

Who were the bad bosses? The ones who got fired on account of conditions exposed by their workers? One of them was manager of a railway yard. His workers wrote: "For ten months of his management 2,500 more tons of oil were used than needful; healthy locomotives decreased twenty-five per cent.; accidents increased threefold. Workers began to fear him, saying: 'The union seems unable to protect us from this man.' . . . Nothing was done by him to increase production; nothing was repaired. He gave his attention to the whims of the specialists; he talked of taking the children's home and the day nursery to enlarge the size of their private apartments. . . . He took no interest in education. For two years and a half he did nothing to improve the life of the workers."

These are the tests that damn or commend a man in Russia. They are sane tests of a world that is building; beside them the tests passed in the rest of the world seem utterly insane. Where else but in Russia would the greatest daily in the country give columns of space for months, where else would discussion go on hotly across thousands of miles of cities and mines and factories, not about sensational sins and crimes in high life, but about men of whom it is said: "They are bringing order out of chaos. They are making life better for the workers round

them. They are capable of organising their fellows for the conquest of the world."

Week after week, as you mix with the common people of Russia, you find other ways in which life is different. The workers in mine and factory are criticising not only bosses, but the methods of industry and its relation to government. As you go into their meetings, you discover that they have the sense of being able to change this, and that they are taking an interest in it. The men who sit in government come to the weekly meetings of the factory that elected them (for election in Russia is by working groups, not localities), and explain to their constituents what they are doing. Any time in the year they may be recalled, if the meeting does not like their actions. A new man is chosen and sent in their place any time in the year. This is one of the ways of keeping government close to the actual will of the workers.

Peasants also I saw, thousands of them coming up to Moscow to visit the great Agricultural Exposition. They came free of charge on the government railroads and municipal street-cars; they were housed and fed free of charge in the co-operative houses of groups of city workers. They went to the Peasants' House and found there reading rooms, baths, agricultural information and a legal aid department to connect them with the government. This also is something unknown outside Russia.

Every city factory and government department adopts some country village to which it acts as big brother, sending down lecturers and teachers and

books and information. A group of students of my acquaintance adopted a certain township, and in summer went to live and teach throughout its villages, sharing with the peasants the knowledge they had gained.

The students of Russia are a chapter by themselves. The universities are jammed with young men and women, not those who can afford leisure and a college course, but those who are chosen by unions and government departments as especially capable and needing special knowledge. They come for training for jobs already known and go back to use their knowledge for purposes desired by their fellow-workers.

In the summer the students go out on vacation trips which cost nothing and which are planned for the good of the country. They visit coal mines, and the coal miners go to Moscow to visit the students. They make surveys of villages and escort trains of peasants to the Exposition. They go as guests to little Republics in the heart of Asia. The little Republics give them horses and food, and they give in return the first maps and geographies ever known in those uncharted regions.

All these things are incidents, seeming at first disconnected. But after a time you see that they are all part of a vast organised Life that is coming slowly into being. It is a life which has nothing to do with the profiteers; it scorns utterly their life and standards. It is bringing up a new generation to scorn these things also.

I talked to a wealthy woman in a summer resort

near Moscow. A new-rich, bejewelled creature, who displayed, towards the end of her talk, a real pathos. She began by damning the government that taxed her highly. She ended almost in tears. "The worst is," she said, "the way our children leave us. My daughter has joined the Communists. It took her three years to do it. They made it very hard for her, as she was the daughter of a bourgeois and they doubted her sincerity. But she stuck to it and joined, and now she will not live with me any more. She has no use for all our ways of living."

There is a lot of "mess" in Russia. Ordinary discomforts of life, the rotten inefficiency of the heating system in winter, offices tangled in red tape, crudities of every kind. There are plenty of things to shock,—profiteers and gambling dens and bootleg whiskey and every rotten thing there is anywhere in the world.

But it is the only place in the world where I get a feeling of hope and a plan. With hundreds of thousands of people living for that plan and dying for it and going hungry for it, and wasting themselves in inefficient work for it, and finally bringing a little order out of chaos for it. America seems cheerful and inconsequential after it. Europe,—the insane nightmare of Europe,—seems impossible to endure.

What goes on now in Russia is much more stupendous than anything which went on under the name of Revolution in those hectic days when Russia was the land of everything good or bad according to your point of view. In Russia when they speak of

the Revolution, they don't mean one grand and horrible unheaval; that was merely the "October Overturn," the taking of power. Now comes the using of power to create a new world through the decades.

There have been many revolutions in history, each with its tragic dignity, its cruelties, its power released. But never has there been a great organisation, in control of the economic as well as of the political resources of a nation, planning steadily through the prose of daily life a future embracing many lands and decades, learning from mistakes, changing methods but not aims, controlling press and education and law and industry as tools to its purpose. . . . This is Common Consciousness in action, crude, half-organised and inefficient, but the first time in History.

II

THE COMMUNISTS' NEW PLAN

In the nations of the West they speak of the new economic policy as Russia's return to capitalism. In Russia they call it "the new road to communism." It is a road that they know will take them many years. Already in two years they have advanced farther than they hoped when they began.

All over Russia the Communists know the plan and their share in it. On the shores of the Black Sea I sat in the gorgeous vineyards of the Crimea, sweeping down under the August sun to the sparkling waters. A watch-patrol of the vineyards sat beside me and explained the reason for his job. Once these grapes belonged to the palace of a grand duke; now they belong to the people. They are turned over to the Board of Health for its sanitariums in the Crimea, where the responsible workers of Russia, worn out with eight years' war and revolution and famine, come to be made over for work that is yet to do. The watchman told me that he was guarding the grapes for the people, for the saving and strengthening of lives that were especially needed in Russia.

On the Arctic shores of the White Sea I talked with Rimpalle, organising mica mines and quarries of feldspar and quartz on a diet of potatoes and

gravy and tea and bread. "I figure," he said, "that up here so near the border and the propaganda of the White Finns, where the peasants are so ignorant and will never produce enough food from their poor soil, it was needed to have an industry to give food to the people."

In Moscow I talked with the manager of an automobile factory, which struggled painfully along for want of capital and a few needed machines. I asked if he could not get a little capital from the government or even from foreigners. "Not yet," he said. "Automobiles are not matters of first necessity. Tractors and trucks come first and need any capital available."

They all know the plan for the rebuilding of Russia towards communism. It changes from day to day in details; they discuss and plan the changes. In principal outline it has been fixed clearly for the past three years.

During the first hot years of Revolution, one could hardly speak of a plan. "Our acts in those years were dictated," says Trotsky, "not by economic good sense but by the need of destroying the enemy. During a war I blow up a bridge to prevent a White Guard advance. From the point of view of economic good sense, that is barbarism. From a political and military point of view it is necessity, and I should be criminal if I did not blow up the bridge in time."

"Why did we take over the banks and the industries by a great mass nationalisation, before we were capable of running these things," he asks. "Because these things were being used to destroy us; the banks

were financing the counter-revolution; every shop, every office was a centre for them. Economic good sense would have taken over only the industries we could manage; but if we had followed this plan, we would not have survived to celebrate now the fifth anniversary of our Revolution.

"We had to concentrate on elementary problems: to keep up, even if half-starved, the workers' state; to feed and clothe the army, defending us on the front; to feed and clothe the city workers who supplied the army."

This was not a joyous time. They speak of it now as the period of military communism; but it was not the kind of communism that anyone wants again. They seized the peasants' grain to feed the cities and the army; they divided it equally at first, to keep everyone alive. Industry already had broken in the long collapse before the Revolution; they created a centralised apparatus to see that at least the war needs of supplies and munitions were met. It was an insufficient amount, but enough so that they won.

"The policy of seizing the peasants' grain led to a cutting down of agriculture. The policy of equal earnings led to a low productivity of labour. The policy of centralised bureaucratic management of industry prevented the efficient use of equipment and working force." . . . No, I am not quoting from the opponents of communism, though these are precisely the most far-reaching criticisms they have made; I am quoting from Trotsky!

"The whole policy of war communism was forced by the blockade, by the régime of a military fortress

with disorganised industry and exhausted resources. . . . The military victory which was impossible without this severe policy, at last allows us to exchange it for measures of economic good sense. Here is the origin of the new economic policy."

What are these measures of economic good sense, in the plan for achieving communism? That the State shall take over all that it is capable of running, beginning with the basic resources of the land. That step by step it shall build up state-owned industries, each of which makes profit and puts it back into development, keeping always the central control in the hands of the people. That in the lesser industries and retail trade, which the State is not equipped and perhaps will never be best equipped to handle, co-operatives of peasants and workers shall be encouraged to fill the gap. That wherever all these methods are insufficient, since Russia is backward and organisation is slow,—private business shall be encouraged to come in on temporary leases, long or short, according to the nature of the business. This private capital shall be allowed plenty of chances for profit, but never the final ownership of basic resources.

The State-owned industries, organised in great interlocking trusts, run themselves meantime for profit, trying, just as the great trusts try in every land, to compete smaller private business out of existence and to get control of the entire field of their industry. They put their profits back into expansion, except such part as is needed for the gradual raising of wages. These wages are settled by col-

lective agreement with the trade unions which are, next to the government, the strongest organisation in Russia. These trade unions are entitled to know all the inner secrets of the business; any citizen is entitled to know, for it is a public affair. The trade unions know how much profits the Textile Trust has made; they know what they can demand for next year's wages.

But they do not demand that all the Textile Trust's profits shall be used to increase wages of textile workers. For they are equally interested in seeing the Textile Trust expand, until all of the textile industry of Russia is owned by the State. There are also other interests to be considered; the peasants, for instance, want cheaper cotton goods.

Shall the profits of the Textile Trust be used to expand the business, or to advance the wages of textile workers, or to reduce the price of goods to the peasant? As Russia slowly struggles to her feet out of the ruins of war, it is the Communist Party that decides these questions, enforcing its will then through the government apparatus and also through its influence in the unions, yielding now a little to this group and now a little to that, so that all of Russia may rise together.

Last fall, for instance, the peasants were raising a bitter cry. The state-owned industries, starting with no capital at all, and having to pay for new machinery out of income, were charging all the traffic would bear, in order to get on their feet. For a year the government favoured the industries, letting them have their way. Then the reports came in;

some of the big State trusts, selling necessities, had made as high as 200 and 300 per cent. in dividends. The peasants complained that they had to give six times as much grain for a yard of cloth as prewar. . . . Promptly the order went forth: "Cut the price of State-made goods thirty to sixty per cent., according to the industry." The price was cut in a week; the following week sales to peasants increased eighty per cent.

It is a constant day by day planning, to bring the country forward as a united whole, helping the industries that are weak, and when they grow strong, making them contribute to the common life. For although the State trusts of Russia are exactly like capitalist trusts as we know them, in matters of profit-making and organisation, there is this final difference. When the reports come in at the end of the year, the stockholders to whom report is made are the State; the disposal of those profits and the next year's policy is a public affair, publicly discussed and decided. The unions in every industry are as much interested in increasing production as the manager is, for it will return to them partly in increased wages and partly in the glory of having it known to all that their industry has advanced and is helping Russia.

This is not communism,—no. They call it State Capitalism, which means that it is capitalism controlled and owned and directed by the State. They say that in the midst of a capitalist world with which they must do business, and in a backward country technically unskilled and unorganised, it is as near

to communism as they can go for the present. They say it is the first step towards communism; that these industries owned by the State will expand, settling their labour questions with the strong trade unions and their marketing questions through the co-operatives, and that these groups together, influenced from within by the Communists in all of these organisations, can develop and guide the growing industry of Russia, shaping it year by year, in accordance with new knowledge and experience, to be of service, not to a few capitalists, but to all the people.

And meantime, while the State holds the basic resources in its hands, renting out some of them for development and getting them back in the end organised and improved, the schools and the press and the social resources of the land shall be used to train a new generation, not lazy and ignorant and self-centred like the old generation, but technically keen and socially accustomed from earliest days to co-operative labour. So that a generation hence, when Russia has developed industries and mines, the resources of all the people, there will be a new generation fit to run these things for the common good.

That's the Plan. What are their resources and how are they succeeding? The rest of this book is an attempt to answer that question. Here are a few facts.

Five years ago, in the darkest hours of the Revolution, Russia offered to the world on February 4, 1919, the following conditions by radio and confirmed them later in April to the unofficial American representative, Mr. Bullitt:

(1) Recognition of all past debts;
(2) turning over of raw materials as guarantee for loans;
(3) concessions at their choice;
(4) territorial concessions in the form of military occupation of some districts of Russia by the Entente of her Russian agents.

All this she offered, in return for being let alone. What is her present position? She has recognised no debts and seems unlikely to except for value received in the shape of new advantages; she is giving no deposits of raw material to anyone to hold; she is growing more and more reticent in the question of concessions; as for military occupation, she is not likely to admit any foreign armies. Her lands have reached again to the port of Vladivostok; her influence stretches down into Asia. In relation to foreign pressure, she has grown stronger year by year.

Within her own borders, the State has control of the following resources:

(1) All the land belongs to the State. It is rented out to the peasants through their village governments in return for a tax on their harvest. They have permanent right to use and to pass from father to son, but no right to sell or mortgage. Land rents cannot be made a source of profit or exploitation.

(2) The land and buildings in the cities belong to the municipal governments, who rent them out and run their city budget from the proceeds, repairing the ravages of war first, and then expanding the

cities and cutting down rents for the workers. The public utilities are also publicly owned.

(3) The railways, about forty thousand miles of line, are also the property of the State. They are used, as the Workers' Government decides, sometimes to make profit towards their own expenses, sometimes to build up a struggling but necessary industry by low freight rates, sometimes to bring tens of thousands of peasants on free trips to an Agricultural Exposition in Moscow, or to take thousands of students on free trips all over the land..

(4) All industrial enterprises and properties belong legally to the State, which may run them itself or lease them out to private operators. Four thousand of the largest establishments are operated directly by the State, employing one million workers; four thousand of the smallest, employing eighty thousand workers, have been leased, but even of these half are run by co-operatives or workers' organisations, and only half by private capitalists.

(5) Private capital is employed mostly in trade. A year ago at the end of 1922, it was estimated that thirty per cent. of the internal trade was in private hands, fifty-five per cent. in the hands of State organisations and fifteen per cent. run by co-operatives. Now the co-operatives have increased at the expense of the private firms; co-operatives handle about twenty-seven per cent. of internal trade, private business men somewhat less than twenty per cent.

(6) Foreign trade is entirely in State hands. Extremely high protection or absolute prohibition of imports may be used to bring into life some new

struggling industry in Russia which the State desires. For instance, English coal has recently been shut out of Petrograd for the first time in history, in order to stimulate the coal industry of the Donetz. In the end this will prove uneconomic, as the Donetz is too far away to supply Petrograd continuously; but the temporary stimulant is needed to bring up production and reduce mining costs. A rigid policy against imports has given Russia in one year's time a favourable balance of trade; ninety million gold roubles more exports than imports. This gives the State capital for expanding industry; but at any moment, if it should be decided that she has enough capital and wants cheap goods for the peasants, she could reverse this policy. No "private interests" have anything to say about it; the "Big Interests" are all in State hands.

In fact, there are not at present as many "private interests" in Russia as the Communists would really like to see. For the State has not nearly capital enough to develop Russia rapidly, and is extremely willing to give private capital chances to assist in development, as long as those chances do not threaten the ultimate public ownership of public resources. Feeling secure of the ultimate sources of power, the State offers to private capital little monopolies and contracts more sweeping than are even allowed under competition in capitalist lands.

I talked with Jigalko, chairman of Concessions, in the Ukraine. He told me they wanted foreign capital to make tractors; the State was prepared to donate factory buildings and a certain amount of

equipment and selling stations all over the Ukraine. He would have preferred American capital, as their technical organisation was better, but he had no means of contact with America, so he was considering offers from German and Czecho-Slovak firms.

"Will the lucky firm have a monopoly of tractor making?" I asked.

"Not necessarily," he answered. "It depends on the terms of the contract. If we should find a firm making a satisfactory tractor, with enough capital to put behind rapid development and to supply all the growing needs of the Ukraine, and if they would go into partnership with the State on some satisfactory basis, we furnishing buildings and selling apparatus and they furnishing technical ability and working capital,—obviously, in such a case, it would be best to have a monopoly, thus avoiding the waste of duplicate selling stations and duplicate repair stations and repair parts all over the country." . . . That was the kind of a chance offered to private capital. Monopoly contracts in fields where conditions made it wise to avoid duplication.

Another form of contract with private capital much favoured is the agreement with the Barnsdell International Corporation for drilling oil-wells in the fields of Baku. The government oil company, Aznepth, remains in control of the fields; the Barnsdell Company furnishes machinery and drills wells for a proportion of the oil. They are doing this in a proved oil-field, producing the most valuable oil in the world, extremely rich in machine oils; they

expressed themselves to me as quite satisfied with the co-operation they received.

"As for the small business men," said the president of a government bank to me, "they are almost as free as they are in any country. In the United States, also, their ability to flourish is limited by the great trusts, which encourage them as long as they contribute to its profits. Standard Oil can encourage independent companies who patronise its pipe-lines; but it destroys any who threaten its control. Our State trusts do the same. They have not capital enough for all the expansion they need. Private capital can make contracts to supply them with what they need or for new development in partnership with the State or on leasehold contract with the State. But all the force of state industry and state banks and political government is organised to fight an attempt of private capital for ultimate control."

In its relation to private capital, Russia is far more independent to-day than a year ago. During the summer of 1922 there was a mad hunger for capital. I went around with an American business friend, and saw the dozens of chances offered him. Here was a youth from the Educational Productive Association, representing five million of the youth of Russia, organised for Physical Training. "Our head office in Moscow," he said, "supports itself by concessions from the government. We have the monopoly for supplying sporting goods for Russia."

It was a staggering monopoly, with a market of a million young people. They were making money, though terribly in need of capital for expansion.

They wanted money especially for a little concession given them by the city of Moscow,—the running of auto-busses in the streets. The street-car system of Moscow was terribly crowded, and their one little auto-bus was coining money. It would pay for itself in a single summer. But they wanted some maker of auto-busses to go into partnership with them and supply a dozen busses. They would furnish gasoline, chauffeurs and management; the city would take shares and give them a monopoly, since they would then be able to expand rapidly and furnish better transportation for Moscow. . . . The auto-bus company has now, after a year, many more autos; but the city street-car has expanded faster than anyone hoped; it has built twenty-five miles of new lines and added hundreds of cars; if the city gives monopolies now, it will demand a bigger share in the returns.

Another scheme I heard,—a young mechanic interested in electric light bulbs. They were being made by a government factory in Petrograd, and the government department stores contracted to take all the output. They could only make 2,000 a day, for their machinery was largely wrecked; two hundred thousand dollars would equip them again to produce 100,000 a day.

They would gladly have taken in private capital as partner; if private capital was not to be found, then some day in a year or two the government would find the money. Meantime, this young man wanted to manufacture the metal parts for those bulbs, bought now in Germany. Seven or eight young mechanics, clubbing together, offered their time for

the business; they needed two or three thousand dollars for dies and preliminary samples. They were promised a contract for all their output. If they could start now on a small scale, then when the big factory expanded, they also could expand. Of course some day the state electric light industry would have money enough to handle their end of the job also, and would want to buy them out on its own terms. But that time was a long way ahead; if they made satisfactory metal parts for the bulbs, the state electric light industry would prefer to use its income for other expansion.

A man that I know came into Russia with $5,000, and got a contract for running correspondence schools in Russia. He could have had a monopoly contract, but wisely refused it, trusting to his ability to satisfy the Department of Education. He numbers his pupils now by tens of thousands. He was given free of charge a six-story building well located in Moscow.

Those were the chances going begging in 1922, in the mad rush to reconstruct Russia, and the painful lack of resources. No one now could get a building on such terms. But fortunately for Russia, the few who had courage to take advantage of these conditions were those who wanted to help Russia, rather than to drive hard bargains. The correspondence school in question uses all its profit from private pupils to finance large non-profit-making schemes of education. It does most of its work on contract for the Board of Education or the All Russian Trade Unions, accepting from them guarantee against loss

and payment of costs. Thus it flourishes and expands; if it had had a different attitude it would never have taken the chance when it did, nor probably would it ever have aroused enough trust to get the contract.

That was the summer when Russia went to Genoa and The Hague, prepared to give almost anything in return for credits. Her industries and agriculture were so ruined by war, revolution and famine, that she doubted her own ability to stagger to her feet without foreign help. No nation in Europe had done so; she was more backward than any. She was prepared to go very far in concessions.

Never again, I think, will there be such a hunger for foreign capital as in that summer of 1922. It was an incoherent desire; it did not know how to make itself plain. It was still mixed with suspicion and doubt; foreign business men came and tried, and found no point of contact and went away again. But the desire was there, almost desperate in its hunger for reconstruction quickly. But swiftly, as the summer advanced, the State industries began to improve, and began themselves to furnish capital for some of the needed expansion. They began to speak of "putting harder terms to foreign capital."

To foreign capital it will not seem that the terms are harder, but only that they are more definite. For the real business chances of Moscow never reached foreign understanding at all. Too many misconceptions lay between, too much impatience on the part of foreigners, too much suspicion on the part of Russians. Life now becomes clearer and

more definite. There will be good opportunities for investment for many years to come in developing Russia, better thought out and better planned and surer. But the chance to get buildings and farms and monopolies for nothing, if one would only take them and use them to rebuild Russia,—these chances are no longer so recklessly offered. Since that time there have been two fair harvests; since that time State industries have acquired self-confidence.

What is the ultimate control behind these State industries, to prevent them from coming under private control in the end? How is the government organised? What are its ruling forces? I went myself to several Moscow elections.

Voting is not by district and by ballot, but by factory meeting or village town-meeting. Elections in Moscow went on for an entire week, each factory choosing the time most convenient for it. The workers voted on factory time; practically all of them voted.

I went with the employés of the Foreign Office to their voting. Since it takes five hundred workers to elect one delegate to the Moscow Soviet (which in turn sends its delegates to the All Russian Congress), and since the Foreign Office did not have enough employés to be entitled to a representative, they combined with the State Bank and several little factories in the neighbourhood. They all marched together to a central hall, two thousand in all, entitled to four representatives.

At the entrance they were checked off by a man acquainted with all of them. Inside the hall they

sang the International, and then heard reports. A man from the Communist Party made the first speech, telling what the last year's programme of the government had been and how far it had been fulfilled; what next year's plans were, in taxes and water supply and city improvements and regulation of wages The crowd determined how long he should speak; they voted him twenty minutes at first, but grew interested and extended the time. The rank and file were obviously in control of the meeting.

Disappointment swept the crowd when the chairman announced that no opposition candidate had declared himself. "How dull," said everyone. "This is the first year there has been no opposition. Can't they even give us a debate?" Nominations from the crowd were asked for, but none were forthcoming. Several questions were asked, and replies given; then the communist programme was adopted, followed by the adoption of the candidates, and they all went home.

The factories that had an opposition bragged about it. "We had the best election in town," said the Amo factory. "Three different parties and lots of attacks. A Social Revolutionary got up, and denounced the government for failing to keep its promises. 'Two years ago they promised you a new world,' he said. 'Now they offer you a better water-supply and a few more electric lights.' There is some interest in that kind of election." . . . But here also the Communists were chosen. Such were elections all over Moscow, more like the choosing of delegates from a labour union to a central council,

or the returning of tried officers in a commercial club by unanimous consent after a year's satisfactory work.

How do the Communists keep the power in these elections? How would the workers throw out the Communists if they didn't like them? Where would dissatisfaction express itself first? The Communists know all the tricks of politics that are known in any country; the control of press, of election boards, of political machinery. In the elections themselves I could not detect any atmosphere of compulsion; they asked questions freely and went out satisfied. I have no doubt that, when necessary, the Communist Party uses all the various means known in politics for keeping itself in power. But these means do not work forever in other countries; the opposition strengthens and at last supplants the government. In Russia the opposition grows less with each new year; old parties dissolve and beg for peace. The Communist control goes farther back into industry and life than any mere political trick or compulsion.

It is a marvellous organisation, unlike any party known in history. It is a dictatorship of half a million Communists over one hundred and thirty million people. Yet it has organised itself to keep in power for a generation, by studying the desires of all the people, over thousands of miles of country, and by supplying those desires, as far as it finds it necessary, moulding them always a little further in the direction of its aim.

There are millions of votes cast each year for the

Communists, but the people casting those votes do not rank as Party Members. For to be a Party Member is something far more than voting. It is to be organised for life in a compact unit whose purpose takes precedence over every other interest. You are a Communist first and everything else afterwards. You are on call always, to go wherever you are sent throughout Russia.

Those half million Communists are scattered throughout the country, at strategic posts of industry and government. Every large factory, every notable village, has its Communist nucleus. If any factory had no Communists, some would be sent from Moscow to take jobs there. They do the work of ordinary workmen, but they are expected to work harder than anyone else, to be examples of loyalty and energy, to keep forever in touch with public opinion in their place of work, to know the needs of the workers and explain to them the purposes of the government. They are expected to take the initiative in extra work nights, or Sundays, or for famine emergencies. They may not always live up to these expectations, but if they don't, they may be thrown out of the Party on complaint from a non-party worker. They are expected to secure and hold political leadership by constant knowledge and diligence in public affairs.

In every factory the Communist group holds weekly meetings. The policies of government come down from Moscow to be discussed here and the result of their discussion goes back to the centre in organised fashion. . . . I attended, in the Donetz

Basin, a district meeting of the Communist Party. It had been decided in Moscow in the Central Executive of the Party that the main government problems for the year were (1) the reconstruction of heavy industry; (2) the relation of the many nationalities in the soviet federation; (3) the cleaning out of bureaucracy, inefficiency and red tape in the State machine. High and important Communists discussed these things in the papers; the discussions went out to every factory group and were repeated there; they were talked over with non-party workers. Then came the district meetings.

Four or five hundred men and women filled the hall in Red Lugansk, a mining town in the Donetz Basin. Miners and employés of the health department, workers from locomotive factory and enamelware factory; managers from these places also, since they also were Communists. I was there with President Rakovski of the Ukraine, but he made no speech till evening; he was there, getting his orders, not giving them.

Hot were the criticisms passed of the government. The manager of the locomotive works arose: "For a year I have induced my workers to keep going on low wages and hard conditions by appealing to their loyalty to the Revolution. For a year I have told them how Russia needs locomotives. We brought production up to thirty-five new locomotives in our plant this year. But the first of those thirty-five, finished a year ago and launched on the tracks with a celebration, is still in the yards. Someone in Mos-

ow forgets to take away those thirty-five locomotives."

"Perhaps you charge too much," shouted a voice from the hall. "What do your locomotives cost?"

"How the hell do I know?" came the answer. "That's some more of this damned bureaucracy. I know everything that goes on in my plant. I know I have reduced by thirty per cent. the number of hours required to build a locomotive. But my coal comes from a mine ten miles up the valley and neither the manager of the mine nor I know what I pay him. These little things are a matter of bookkeeping in Moscow."

That was the concrete stuff they were talking about, with wrath and freedom. They were demanding more local autonomy and less red tape. They made suggestions, concrete ones, about getting it. At the close of the day they elected delegates to go to the regional congress at Bakhmut, centre of the coal region. From here the delegates went on to Kharkov for the Ukrainian Congress of the Party; from Kharkov, without returning, by special train to Moscow for the All Russian Party Congress which decides the programme of the government.

Thus in one month's time the problems of the State went forth to every factory and mine and village of importance, and the answers rolled back, gathering definiteness as they came, to be worked into the Party Programme on which the government would act for a year. Then the delegates went back, to factory, mine and village, to explain why they had adopted just this programme and no other.

That is the way the Communist Party is organised for action, and for keeping in touch with the wishes of the people. Equally important is the way its individuals are disciplined and chosen.

It takes from six months to three years to get into the Communist Party. You state in your application the kinds of work you are fit for. You go into regular classes and meetings to fit yourself for various forms of service. You take military training; you attend discussions on economics and international affairs and internal problems of Russia.

You also go under discipline of the severest kind, which enters right into your pay envelope and the kinds of work you are allowed to do. You cannot make money for yourself by trading, or by exploiting the work of another. You must be, usually, in state service, either in state industry or government office. If you get a wage higher than a certain sum, which was once almost nothing, but is now nearly fifty dollars a month, you must divide the surplus with the party Treasury, which is used for the sick and dependents of the party. If you get even as low as fifteen or twenty dollars a month, you may find it attacked by famine assessments or other emergencies, by party vote. I know women and men who gave their wedding rings to the famine, because it was voted by the local branch of the party.

A Communist friend of mine held two jobs, in order to make ends meet in his family, which contained two children. He worked at one in the day and another in the evening. He got from both of his jobs, which were responsible positions in the gov-

ernment, a total wage of fifty-five dollars a month. At that time the Communist basic wage was twenty-five dollars; it has since risen, as the general standard of workers' living rises. He had to give fifteen of his fifty-five to the party. But if he needed extra help for his children or sanitarium care for himself in illness, he was entitled to go to the party schools or the party sanitariums. The party is like one solid family, pooling its resources and uniting its forces.

This organised force is always mobilised for action; it can be cast at a word into any part of Russia. When shock troops were needed to stiffen the battle-front, when men are needed to stem typhus epidemics, or to fight famine, or to increase production in some ruined factory or flooded mine, or to clean up some plague spot deadly to touch,—Communists are mobilised and sent to these jobs. Week by week the Communists I know receive orders to go on certain evenings to give lectures to unions or factory groups, or to give certain Sundays to community work. If Communists are lax in their duties, they may at any time be "cleaned out" of the party.

There was a great "cleaning" at the time the new economic policy was introduced, in order to get rid of those who might corrupt the party under the new money system. Any worker or peasant, whether Communist or not, might bring charges against a Communist that he was doing things unworthy a party member,—that he got drunk or profiteered or was rough with workers under him. The hearings

were open; if the party considered a member a drawback to them, they threw him out.

Less spectacular cleanings go on from week to week. I have met men, in the past two years in Russia, who were causing chaos, who were playing politics, who were destroying efficiency by their petty personal preferences. I have felt at times utterly hopeless of the department in which they worked. And then, after six months or a year, I have suddenly heard that these men had been cleaned out of the party, and retired to jobs of unimportance. Not all of them yet; there are plenty who ought to go. But there is a constant force within the party fighting for the purity of its ranks.

If a Communist commits a crime against the Republic, the penalty is greater than for an ordinary man. Graft in office, which in others might be merely the bad habit of ancient Russia, is in him treason to the Revolution. Communists have been shot for graft in office.

Half a million men organised under such terms are scattered across Russia. North of the Arctic circle, south of the Caucasus, east of the Volga I found them, in timber industry, in little provincial towns,—a far-flung group sent out to be ministers of finance in little republics or saw-mill workers labouring to increase production. They are no angels or supermen; they can be suspicious and hard to deal with and inefficient. But they act according to one programme. Their loyalty is cemented by the cause they work for, by impossible dangers and hardships already endured. They know the job they are

on, and their part in relation to Russia and the world. The Communists in the oil industry know quite well the importance of oil in controlling the world's commerce. The Communists who gave their lives in famine-fighting did so knowing that agriculture was the basis of Russia. The Communists on low wages in the schools know what depends on the education of the youth for achieving the goal they have set.

I met one man who had organised an army in Siberia, and was now dying of tuberculosis in a small provincial town, but still working on against the famine. I knew another, a young boy who spent four years in Hungarian prisons, and whose heart would never be well from the tortures he had had there; he was in the far north building roads where the open-air life might keep him alive a little longer. There is not one of them who has not lived for months on black bread and soup of rotten, frozen potatoes and kept on working at high pressure. They have few material possessions; they are ready at a day's notice to go where they are sent for the Revolution. Last fall there were complaints that many Communists in Moscow were growing self-important and "living like bourgeois" and getting out of touch with the common people; the arm of the Central Committee reached out and transferred them to jobs in Turkestan and Siberia and little provincial towns.

Why should anyone enter a party which demands such discipline, such giving up of all private comfort and individual choice? For the fun of ruling Russia; for the fun of building an empire and recon-

structing a nation; for the pleasure of creating something new in the world. Anyone who will give up private interests in order to manage public affairs can do it in Russia. They choose themselves by these hard and simple tests.

Behind the Communist Party comes the Communist Youth, equal in numbers to the adult party. Trained already from childhood to act together and to look upon public service as the great end of life. Behind them are the Young Pioneers, boys of ten to sixteen, who already have no memories antedating the Revolution.

This is the Communists' new Plan and the machinery they have to put behind it. Many more details of that machinery will be discussed in this book. Can they succeed? Or will private capital grow stronger and reach out for political power and secure it?

That is for the future to reveal; it depends, and Russia knows it depends, on the rest of the world. At present, her existence in a capitalist world demands agreements with private capital, honestly kept; she is making and keeping such agreements; she is running banks and industries on that basis. Before her stretches a long year by year fight in the economic field between state capitalism which hopes to become communism, and private capitalism which hopes to become dominant.

Into that struggle enter all the forces known to man: the gold in the banks of America, the nationalist uprisings in India, the grasping of French imperialists for the Ruhr, the persevering labour of

unknown Communists in the mines and factories of Russia. The forces on the one side are organised by the biggest powers of world finance; the forces on the other by the Communist Party of Russia, which is itself no negligible power.

"There is no guarantee of success written in the stars," said Trotsky. "Success depends on careful planning and relentless * carrying through of plans. Failure is always possible, either on the military or the economic front, if we are stupid. A social revolution is a very dangerous thing."

* As, for instance, the shutting-down of unprofitable plants, even at the cost of temporary dislocations of unemployment.

III

THE BATTLE-FRONT OF INDUSTRY

"How are we going to make our steel mills go? And our mines? And our railroads?" These questions are on everyone's lips in Russia. The workers discuss them in union meetings. The heads of industry discuss them publicly and then confer with the workers. The managers of the coal industry confer with the coal miners' union and work out a joint programme for industry; then they all go to Congress together to ask for what they want.

All questions of war and army and foreign affairs were completely dropped out of the discussion at the Tenth All Russian Congress of Soviets. Trotsky and Chicherin did not even make reports. The Congress was hearing reports about industry and agriculture and finance and education. Even Trotsky said to me: "If I get the army matters in good shape soon, I may give some time myself to coal and steel."

Imagine American workers raising the question in their unions: "How are we going to save the Steel Trust? What can we do to help Standard Oil?" . . . Imagine our Secretary of War remarking: "Now that we have peace on our hands, I am invited to go to Pittsburgh and help them organise the Steel Trust."

. . . This will give an idea of the difference between

the two countries. In Russia these industries are government property and everyone expects to benefit from their improvement, especially the workers employed in them.

I sat in late December a year ago in a Conference of Industries and Transport in Moscow and heard several hundred representatives from all parts of Russia tell their tale of woe. It was as if Gary and Morgan and Rockefeller and the National City Bank, with hundreds of lesser industrialists, should hold an open conference, before Congress opens, to decide what they want the government to do for industry.

In Russia these conferences are quite open, for they are matters of public policy, in which the individuals present have no personal profits to make, except the wage of some fifty dollars a month which they draw from the State. Yet they were much the same type of highly trained personnel one might expect to find in the management of industries everywhere. Of the 274 men on the highest boards in the Department of State Industries, under which the meeting was held, 204 had had university education. Before the Revolution, seventy-five had been higher technical managers, and fifty-one had been upper administrative personnel in industries. They were no novices discussing industry; they were men of experience.

They would afford to speak more openly than any similar group anywhere in the world. If they wanted railroad rebates, they could demand them openly. They would probably get them, if it was a question

of saving some important but struggling industry. . . . When they had made their programme, they combined with the labour unions to present a united demand of Industry to Congress. That is how industry works in Russia to-day.

Fuel spoke first in the conference. Coal and Oil and Wood are under one management in Russia, which is responsible for seeing that the state industries and railroads get enough fuel. Fuel told its tale of trouble and achievement for the past year. It was a story typical of all Russia's industries.

All of Russia's industries were bled white by the war. In America and some other countries, the industries made money from the war; they can even afford to wish for another one. The government gave them contracts and paid for their work in cash, raising the cost of the war by loans which the next generations will have to pay.

Russia had, after the Revolution, no credits and no way of raising war loans. Yet she had three more years of war on many fronts. She took the cost of this war day by day out of her industries. She ordered munitions and supplies, and the loyal industries, which were now state-owned, produced these things. The State, in return, gave no money, for she had none; she gave food for the workers, and raw material when she could find it. She asked her industries to make the same sacrifice that soldiers make on the front,—to give everything they had without return. She pooled all the resources of the country,—the grain of the peasants, the labour of

the city workers, the raw materials which still existed,—and used them for national defence.

As the war and blockade continued, the food supply lessened. Raw materials gave out and were madly requisitioned from anywhere they could be found. Machinery wore out and they went on working with partial equipment which is a wasteful way of working. Profit did not count; the wrecking of industry did not count. What counted was war necessity and saving the Revolution.

No country in the modern world has ever taken the cost of a long war out of day by day labour. Russia did it, and left industry ruined. But she has this advantage: she acquired no war debts. Whether she may some day acknowledge the debts of the Czar is another matter; for three years of war following the Revolution, there are no debts even claimed by anyone. The cost was paid by the industries and peasants and workers of Russia as they went, sometimes willingly, sometimes under compulsion. This gives an idea of the strain the Russian industries endured, in addition to the upheaval caused by revolution.

Over two years ago, Russia's industries went on a peace basis. The war no longer needed them; they were allowed to try to become self-supporting. They were still state-owned, in the sense that the State was ultimate stockholder; but they were to be run on a business basis, and not merely to serve the army. They were to produce and sell and builc themselves up from the proceeds. That is the industrial aspect of the new economic policy.

The government gave what it could spare of capital and raw material to start them. But this was little. The peasant market was non-existent because of the famine. The workers were hungry, the machinery worn out. They had only one asset, the hope that if still, out of the ruins, they could produce something, it would not be taken away for the needs of war. They could sell it and pay their workers and repair their machinery.

That, very simply, was the new policy in industry. But it could not start at once. Many departments of the government, schools, army, foreign affairs, could not be self-supporting. There were no taxes yet except the grain tax of the peasant, and this was needed for the famine. So still the various government departments kept on ordering things from the state industries, and both sides knew that there was no money to pay. Seventy million dollars' worth of products were taken by the government from industry in that first half of 1922, without making any return. Not till October of that year, fifteen months after the new policy was decreed, did all government departments reach the stage of paying for the things they ordered. The loyal industries bore the strain, in order to pull the whole country to its feet. Even under this burden, they began to move forward.

Fuel was the first industry to bear the burden of the transition from war communism to self-support. Every industry in Russia needed fuel, and none of them yet had money to pay for it. So fuel was given free, long after everything else except food was paid for.

The miners of the Donetz and the managers of the mines kept on producing coal and giving it to Russia, in return for bare rations of black bread. There was ghastly famine to the east, there was dire need of coal for railroads, since even under the best conditions the transport of enough food to the Volga was an all but impossible problem. The miners of the Donetz kept on; but their own food gave out and thousands of them went to the farms to keep from starving.

Their delegates came up to Moscow to the Central Congress of Soviets, saying: "We work waist-deep in water. Can't you give us means to repair the mines?" In their union halls, all over the Donetz, they put up their list of Heroes, the men who collapsed at work and were carried away, only to return to the struggle after a few days' rest. They also posted lists of Deserters, who quit because it was hard.

That was the way they mined coal on the Donetz, through years of war and of famine and the first year of peace. When I visited the mines myself, early in 1923, there was already a different story. It was still bad, from any standard of decent living. Production was less than half prewar, which meant that the expense of the product was almost doubled; to the injury of all industry. Wages were very low and not always paid in time. Housing was in shocking condition; even before the war it was very bad, and the civil war had destroyed one quarter of the houses. There were cases in the Donetz of fifteen workers in a single room.

All these things were duly noted and denounced in the soviet newspapers, which do not hide unpleasant facts. But there was already a note of hope in the Donetz. The year before the complaint had been about food, made in the form of protest meetings and near-riots. Now everyone had enough to eat. There were no more protest meetings. The complaints went in orderly manner through unions and factory committee and press, and were eventually attended to in slow Russian fashion.

I walked through mine corridors where men were working, miners who bragged that a year ago this part of the mine was flooded, and had now been reclaimed by the energy of the new manager. I saw red banners proudly displayed in factories, "for the fulfilment of production programme." I talked even with American miners who had worked one year on the Donetz and were not anxious to go back to America. Life was harder here, they said, but more secure. No strikes, no unemployment; everything settled by union agreement. They figured that in a few years more "it would be a pretty good country for a worker." . . . Three million dollars had just been appropriated for housing construction.

The Conference of Industries, which I heard a year ago in Moscow, covered the highly significant months of this transition. From October, 1921, to May, 1922, the problem of Fuel was to get paid for the coal they produced, without wrecking industry by their demands.

The coal still went on government order to the necessary industries, to the railway famine transport

and other desperate needs. For a time the government permitted the Coal Industry to sell five per cent. of its output, and use the money for necessary supplies for the mines. Even this five per cent. could not be got to market, for the railways were choked with the free fuel for more necessary industries. Soon the railroads began to charge freight for the fuel which was being given away. They needed the money for locomotives. But Fuel grew desperate.

At last, on the first of May, 1922, a year after the new economic policy had started in law, all free fuel was abolished by decree, confirmed by the highest authority of the State. Even then the producers of fuel, who had waited so long for their pay, put the interests of the State before their own. "We must adopt a policy of flexibility and firmness," said Smilga, chief of the Fuel Administration, "because a sudden and disorderly demand for payment, without reaching agreement with our chief customers, would bring an upheaval in industry and transport."

During the summer, when coal cost 700,000 roubles to produce, they had to sell to the railways for 400,000. In the autumn, when the first good harvest came, thousands of miners deserted to the villages to get something to eat. The mines could not hold them, having no money. But the crisis was not as bad as the year before. In that worst year they reached zero of net production, mining in the worst weeks only enough coal for the miners' own needs; but in 1922 they never fell below 300,000 tons per month, of which half was clear.

By October, Fuel was being paid in full for its

product. Even a small subsidy came from the State to reconstruct the mines. It was possible to pay real wages, and this brought back the miners. The output of coal went up steadily; 483,000 tons in September, 633,000 in October. Now, a year later, it is a million tons a month, forty per cent. of prewar.

This was the tale of Fuel, an industry which, instead of enriching itself from the war, bore on its shoulders the burdens of the country and was now painfully emerging. None of the reports mentioned the earlier and even more difficult days, when the oil was for nearly two years in the hands of the British and the coal mines were held and wrecked by Denikin.

In those terrible days of utterest need, when Moscow and Petrograd had for two winters no fuel, and the industries were closing and the people freezing, the engineers of Russia tore up important railway lines and laid them again, building little spurs into the heart of Russia's forests, dragging out wood, recklessly, wastefully, in the last desperate effort to save transport and send the armies to the front.

But these dark days did not come into the report, for everyone in Russia knew them, and already they were more than a year in the past. So Smilga merely concluded his survey by the cheerful statement that, in spite of the struggle for payment, they had managed in one year to put the industries and railroads back on mineral fuel, keeping wood only as emergency reserve. That was the year's achievement.

After Smilga had spoken for Fuel, Kogan-Bernstein arose to tell the tale of the Railroads. He cast

an ironic glance at Smilga. "Fuel boasts," he remarked, "that in October they at last began to receive full payment for their coal. I am aware of this. They did it by attaching our credits in the State Bank! Now the metal industry wants to do the same. So we are paying in full for fuel and metal and owing everyone else. Some of our workers have received no wages for three months. They are getting one-third the wages of a coal miner; they can't live on it. Even if you get out the coal in the Donetz, our transport is in such condition that we may not be able to remove it.

"We have a harder task than the mines or industries, for they can close unprofitable establishments, but we have to keep the whole line running. We have no working capital, yet we have to give credit for freight while we haul it. We need a subsidy from the State to replace some of the equipment damaged by war. We also demand the right to charge half the prewar rates."

That was their modest demand. Half the prewar rates! The replacing of a little of the wrecked equipment! When Russia took over her railways to operate for the winning of the war, she did not promise them six per cent. return on a high valuation and agree to replace all damages, as America did. She wore out their locomotives and tore up their tracks; the civil war blew up their bridges. Then, when the war was over, she gave them what she could in the way of locomotives, and asked them to become self-supporting as rapidly as possible,—

"but don't charge too much for freight rates, or you will injure the industries of Russia." Under this command the railways were struggling ahead.

Before the war, czarist Russia gave the State railways a billion roubles yearly from its budget. After the wreck of war and revolution, the railways asked the Department of Finance to allow them seventy-five million gold roubles; they got only thirty million. Yet, with practically no working capital, with roads and rolling stock largely ruined, they had achieved thirty-three per cent. of prewar transport. The year after, as they were allowed by an improving Russia, to charge higher and higher rates, as the industries grew to afford them, the railroads showed spectacular improvements in bridges and stations and fundamental repairs.

Iron and Steel told their story after the Railroads. It was a catastrophic tale. These industries need the heaviest capital; they receive orders only when other industries prosper and buy machinery. They were still only four to seven per cent. of prewar, barely working at all, in the basic production of pig-iron and sheet-iron and steel. But the locomotive works were starting, and swinging rapidly ahead to fair production. The government had placed orders for 508 new locomotives and repairs on 1,800 old ones.

As for the lighter industries, they were making few complaints after the first year of peace. Cotton and woolen goods, sugar and rubber, glass and paper, tobacco and matches, chemicals and leather, —they had definitely gone ahead. They did not

need such enormous credits; they could sell directly to the peasant market; even in the year of the famine there were a few people who could buy.

These industries made the change from the old war communism to the new policy of self-support, joyously and with success. Rubber goods were already invading the foreign market, maintaining the old reputation of Russian rubber. Matches were underselling Swedish matches in Europe. Sugar was especially jubilant, announcing that its production in one year had increased five-fold; and the cost of sugar had been reduced from the famine price of sixty cents a pound to nearer ten cents.

It did not take an industrial expert to see cotton goods increasing in Russia. When I first entered, I saw Red soldiers barefoot in summer. Six months later I saw peasants in the markets with rags around their feet in dead of winter. A year later everyone was shod and clad, at least in the central cities. The shops were full of goods, produced by the Textile Trust, good in quality, at about world-market price.

Even these lighter industries endured difficult moments. Cotton goods sold for the first nine months of 1922 below cost of production; no one could afford to pay more, for the harvest was not yet in. Only in the autumn of the year did the price of clothing, reckoned in bread values, pay for the making of textiles. Meantime cotton had drained the supplies of raw materials by selling below cost in order to keep industry going. Even under this strain, it reached two-thirds of prewar production,

and faced then a desperate need of credits; thirty-five thousand tons of raw cotton were needed from abroad and five thousand tons of raw wool from Australia, for an industry which had just begun to pay and must wait for yet another harvest before reaching security.

In the spring especially, Russian industry feels the need of credits. This is the time of depression in industry, when the peasant wants goods, but is unable to purchase. In that first summer of the new economic policy, factory after factory closed down or ran on part time in the summer, though they were producing goods sorely needed. A large factory making agricultural machinery in the Ukraine, for instance, reached the end of its raw material, and was unable to buy more, so it closed down, though the eager peasants placed orders for months ahead. Not till after harvest could they pay for those orders; and no one meantime had credit to carry on production.

Credits! For a whole year, Russia, in her conferences with the outside world, could think of nothing but credits. Either loaned to the peasants' co-operatives to enable them to place orders, or loaned to government industries to enable them to sell on time payments. The security seemed so sound to the Russians, the demand for the goods so solid and tremendous. They could not understand why everyone outside Russia talked about the past and about political considerations, when they wanted to make ploughs and plant seed.

Little by little they realised that they must depend

on their own efforts. All that first year they were afraid their efforts would be insufficient. But the Industries went to the Congress of Soviets with their cry for help. The Communist Party declared that Industry was the next great battle-front of Russia.

That is the way they take up problems,—in war language. First there were the war fronts, to north and south and east and west; next there was the Famine Front, and all the nation's forces were mobilised against it. After the first good harvest came the battle-front of Industry, with Education looming as the next front of the future, to be faced after the second good harvest.

That second good harvest has come in the autumn of 1923. The industries have begun to make their report. The provision trades have paid high dividends, as high as 200 and 300 per cent. The clothing industry also is prosperous. Textiles, which serve the direct market only in part, have smaller dividends; other industries of still remoter connection with immediate sales, are breaking even. But now for the first time, iron and steel have begun to awaken, for the lighter industries have prospered and have begun to buy machinery. In place of the two great furnaces in the Donetz, six have opened, four of which have not run for six years; in the Urals also is similar progress.

Not all the State Industry is yet self-supporting; for repairs are heavy and many industries cannot yet begin to work at full power for lack of a market. Somewhere between two and three per cent. of next

year's State budget will be used to pay deficits in State Industries. But it was plain this last autumn that the battle-front of Industry had been taken and that they could hold it and fortify it. Even without help from any foreign land.

And at once the order went out: "It is time to cut prices." Already the peasant was clamouring at the high cost of articles manufactured by the State Industries. His complaint was just. For a year's time the government had favoured the industries, allowing them their will in the matter of prices. Now they were strong enough to take a little more of the burden, so that the peasant could buy machinery and clothing. Prices of manufactured articles were cut thirty to sixty per cent.

Thus, struggling step by step, have the industries of Russia advanced. Outsiders say carelessly that the improvement in Russia has been due to the introduction of capitalism. The Russians say it has been due to the first two years of peace. They say, in addition, that capitalist industry could not have survived the strain which their industry survived, and could not have rebuilt itself, as they did, without outside aid. They say that any capitalist state, suffering eight years of war and blockade as they did, would have been long since beaten, and turned into a colony of English and French imperialism. They say that their power of resistance and recovery lay precisely in what little communism they have,—in the rigorous control maintained by the State over all its resources, and in the loyal devotion of work-

ers to a State and an industry which they consider their own.

It has been an almost incredible thing to watch,—this revival of industry. I have gone into factories, and found hopeless waste and inefficiency. Bookkeepers who did not know how to bookkeep, supplies unaccounted for, the simplest devices of labour-saving unused. I find every principle of efficiency violated by men who do not know better, or who know but do not care, or who make personal profit out of graft and destruction. I have said again and again that it was impossible for such an industry to succeed; and I have come back a year later to find it increasing production and paying dividends.

Why? I know only two reasons. Russian industries have no debts to pay to the past and they have no labour troubles. These are the assets they have brought out of their revolution, to set against the great losses of disorganisation and destruction.

I shall not discuss the question of past debts in the industries; it leads into the controversy over the return of private property, on which the Russian and foreign point of view will never agree. Let me give merely two examples of the concrete way these questions stand in Russia.

Down in Kharkov I visited a great plant making electric motors. Before the war it belonged to a German Company. The czar seized it at the outbreak of war and reorganised it under a French Company, which continued to make motors. The Bolsheviks seized it after the Revolution, and ran

it themselves, still continuing to make motors. To whom, if to anyone, shall it be returned?

The case of the Moscow street-car line is more typical. It belonged before the war to a Belgian company. The long strain of war and revolution reduced it to ruin, till no cars ran on its lines for many months. The cars themselves were wrecked, the right of way damaged. Every Russian considers that this was the fault of the Entente for financing war against Russia. The Entente considers, of course, that it was the fault of the Revolution.

At any rate, the car-line was wrecked; it was not running. Then bit by bit, after peace came, the workers of Moscow rebuilt it again. They tried to get foreign loans at Genoa and The Hague to rebuild such necessary properties; they offered to deal first with all previous owners, but they asked for a new basis. They got no foreign capital. They built it out of their own hunger, by going on low wages; they built new cars by working on Saturdays and Sundays. And they feel, all the workers of Moscow, that that car-line is theirs. It does not even occur to them that anyone else has a shadow of claim to it. It is only the diplomats of Russia, somewhat experienced in foreign ways of thinking, who even know how to discuss such a claim. If I should say to a street-car conductor in Moscow: "Do you know this line belongs by right to some Belgians?"—he would have no idea what I was talking about.

All of the industrial properties of Russia, whatever their past ownership, went down step by step

under war attrition to ruin, and were built up step by step by the loyalty and sacrifice of the workers. The foreigners say the revolution ruined them; the Russians say it was done by war—(Denikin, Wrangel, Kolchak, Yudenich)—which foreign nations helped finance against them. But neither side can question who it was that rebuilt them.

The loyalty of the Russian workers to their industries,—on what is it based? Why are there practically no strikes in Russian industries? (A few small ones occurred, in the whole of my stay in Russia and were settled in favour of the workers.) Politically, the workers own the government, and know it. Industrially, every State industry makes its agreement with the labour unions, and these agreements give to the unions very large powers.

I visited a factory in Kharkov making electric motors. They told me if I wished to know about technical matters, I should see the Manager, but if I wanted to know about the life inside the factory I should visit the Workers' Committee. These are union representatives, chosen by the factory workers; they have offices in the plant. They have charge of all questions of personnel; they are consulted in hiring and firing. On the day of my visit they were stamping little street-car passes for the men, and arranging the apportioning of apprentices among the workmen of the plant. They handle the social insurance and the workers' education, though these things are paid for by the factory.

An amount equal to a certain part of the pay roll had to be put into a fund for education; another

amount went into a fund for health. In the factory was a library, and a workmen's club which subscribed to newspapers, getting them cheaper in bundle orders. There were seven school-rooms, used every evening for classes for the workers. There was a kindergarten in the yard for children of women workers, and a women's clinic to handle maternity cases. In the city of Kharkov itself I visited a charming Maternity Hospital, run entirely by social insurance funds for the wives of factory members and the women workers in the factories.

This whole system of social care, which other countries consider their final luxury, is considered in Russia the first essential. It is a first cost on industry; it is managed under committees of workers. It is determined by their union contracts, and so highly is it esteemed that it comes even before the raising of wages.

The whole of the worker's life is built around his factory. His voting is done through his factory; his membership in the Communist Party, if he joins, is achieved and maintained through the Communist Committee in his factory. His union membership is again first through the Factory, and then the Industry. His co-operative, from which he gets cheaper food and clothing, is organised by the workers of his factory, and perhaps has a shop on the premises. . . . And he sees how, week by week, as the production of his factory improves, more and more wealth pours into schools for apprentices, and lecture courses and sanitariums; perhaps the industry of which he is a part is already speaking of

renting a villa on the blue shores of the Crimea, for workers who have suffered especially under the strain of war and famine. And if, for a time, the profits of his factory do not come back at once in a better life for him, but are diverted by state order to expand the business or reduce the cost of goods to the peasant,—then this policy also is publicly explained to him, and he can see quite clearly that his temporary sacrifice is not for the benefit of some private enrichment, but is going in certain definite ways to build up Russia, and make life even better for him in the future. That is the result of an open conduct of industry, by an industry which, having nothing to hide, can afford to be open.

In the motor factory of Kharkov, I asked the chairman of the Workers' Committee who was finally responsible for the efficiency of the plant,—the Workers' Committee or the management. "Both of us," he said. "We are responsible for eliminating friction among the workers, but of course we could do nothing without a good technical manager. Fortunately, we have a good one." In that very answer he indicated a sense of proprietorship all the more striking because so unconscious.

"The ultimate responsibility rests," he added after a moment, "neither with the Workers' Committee nor with the Manager, but with the Communist group in the plant. Some of these are in the management, and the rest are scattered as workers through the plant. They have no direct control, but theirs is the moral responsibility of making State Industry succeed. They are especially strong in this

plant; that is why we are working so well. They are the group that see our relation to the rest of Russia; they are the ones who are making the Revolution." . . . And again I realized, as I did so often in Russia, that the Revolution was not a sudden event in the past, but a long process to be achieved through the decades.

In the songs of the young people of Russia, a new attitude towards industry is clearly seen. Industry is not mere making of goods; it is the making of the future. They are "weavers of the shining web of socialism," they are "blacksmiths beating out the keys to happiness." This feeling is not by any means universal; there are hard conditions, and low wages, and grumblings. But the feeling appears; it grows.

I went two years ago to the opening of the Kashira Electric Power Station near Moscow. It was a tremendous event. After the night of war and famine,—the first notable achievement of peace. Begun in the darkest hour of the Revolution, finished through the days when even a single electric lamp was not to be bought in Moscow. I had hunted the whole city of Minsk to buy a Ford spark-plug and obtained only second-hand ones. And through these months of impossible lack, with half-starved workers, a great power station had been built, supplying Moscow with power, first link in the electrification of Russia.

"Why did you use such heavy iron beams across your doors?" a friend who was with me asked the engineer in charge. "Why did you use wood casings

for your turbines?" . . . The engineer laughed. "Do you think we chose our materials?" he said. "We took whatever we could find in Russia." So the electric station had been made, not on credit and with choice of materials, as in other more favoured lands, but out of whatever could be found, and paid for by day by day effort. There was this advantage in such a mode of building; it belonged without debts now to the people.

Thousands of Moscow workers poured out into the country on that great day of the opening, with red banners from their factories which would now know the benefits of Kashira power. The orchestra of the Great State Theatre furnished the music. The highest economic official of the Republic presided. An old blind peasant poet, led by a young boy, stood in working clothes to improvise an ode on the Triumph of Labour over Chaos. The chief engineer and twenty ablest workmen received the Red Banner of Labour, the highest industrial honour of the State. The front pages of all the newspapers were full of Kashira, blotting out foreign politics, blotting out all other news.

For these are the achievements that Russia prizes as triumphs.

IV

THE MONEY POWER IN RUSSIA

Two years ago when Russia again began to use money and to need a gold basis for purposes of foreign commerce, the State Bank opened with ten million dollars worth of paper roubles, rapidly falling in value. In three months' time, the value of the rouble had dropped to one third. Yet at the end of the year the State Bank had twenty million dollars in gold in its vaults.

It is a romance of the money power in Russia. Unlike most such romances, it is simple to understand, for it takes place openly in the sight of all the people. The ways in which banks control industry, the conflict between financial and industrial capital,—these things which elsewhere are shrouded in the mystery of secret conferences of the big interests, are in Russia matters of public policy, known in the workers' unions, discussed hotly in the press.

For more than a year Russia has been, for all practical business purposes, on a gold basis. The government makes its budget in gold; the industries keep their accounts in gold. The workers are paid on a basis more stable even than gold,—a "commodity rouble" reckoned in terms of the cost of living. The actual cash handed to them is partly in

gold value, partly in paper roubles which continue to drop slowly in worth. But all savings, all amounts in hand larger than five dollars, can be kept in stable currency.

I myself saw the gold reserve of the State Bank a year ago. President Scheinmann said I was the first foreigner to see it. The store-rooms were located in the well-lighted first floor of the bank, protected only by iron bars at the windows and the bank guards. The plainly dressed, matter-of-fact clerks broke the seals of the bags at the president's words and poured out heaps of gold coins on the table. I took in my hands bars of gold worth ten thousand dollars each. I saw also high piles of English five-pound notes and smaller piles of American paper money.

"You have made all this gold in one year from paper?" I asked President Scheinmann in wonder.

"Not at all," he answered quickly. "But from the resources of a great nation."

"How did you do it?" I asked. He was quite willing to explain, for his job does not depend on secrecy but on public service.

"We loaned money, for instance, to the Timber Trust. We gave them paper roubles, which they used to pay all their bills in Russia. They exported timber to England. They paid us in English pounds. They paid us not only the loan with interest, but part of their profits. Sometimes as much as half of all they made! The fur industry also has been very profitable, making as much as 200 and 300 per cent. in export trade. On all of these profits

the State Bank demanded its share, for making the first loan."

I gasped at this. "No wonder the State Industries call you a robber," I said, "when you make terms like that."

President Scheinmann smiled. "It is a question of public policy. The next Congress of Soviets may decide on a different method. At present we are building up a gold reserve for Russia."

These were the cold, hard tactics of the State Bank. It set out to make all the money it could, and it did not conceal the fact. At the end of the first year it had twenty million dollars in gold; at the end of the second year one hundred and twenty-five million, half in gold and half in negotiable assets as sound as gold. And this was only part of the Bank's success.

In matters of organisation the Bank also started with nothing. Two years and a half ago, when I first went to the Volga, there were no branches of any bank anywhere in the provinces of Russia. The Central Bank in Moscow had no foreign connections. It lacked public confidence, since the State was paying bills either not at all or in worthless paper roubles.

Within a year there were 158 branches of the State Bank throughout the provinces of Russia; there were foreign connections with most of the countries of Europe. Twice in that first year they tried to open an account in an American bank, but the American Government confiscated the money. Only many months after Europe was dealing di-

rectly with Russian banks did it become possible to send money between Russia and America.

In January, 1922, the Bank received only 599 drafts from foreign countries, and its connections throughout Russia were so poor that half of these could not be delivered, but were returned to the sender. Within nine months delivery was being made on ninety-seven and one-half per cent. of the drafts, of which some 30,000 had been received.

On these drafts also, the Bank pursued its "robber policy." It demanded ten per cent. of the face value for payment in gold. Or it paid in paper roubles at an "official" exchange rate below the actual value. It built itself up into power at the expense of everyone who did business with it; it was ruthless about it, openly ruthless. It had to make money at once; it could not afford to wait as the usual bank in capitalist countries. For it had no capital at all, nothing but paper roubles. It was getting its capital day by day, out of its business transactions.

Even out of the fall of the rouble the State Bank made money. There is a private semi-legal exchange where men speculate in the sale of dollars and pounds and roubles. Here also the State Bank had its agents, sometimes known, sometimes unknown. No tricks of high finance were alien to it. With its superior knowledge it could unload dollars or pounds to force down the price, and buy in again till it increased its reserve. It could not prevent the rouble from falling, for roubles were being printed for State needs, uncovered by gold. But

the State Bank knew beforehand when the money was to be issued; it knew what transactions were under way in the big industries. It speculated with its knowledge on the Black Exchange; the little private traders who gambled there sometimes lost and sometimes won; the State Bank always won.

So, little by little, it built up its gold reserve. The workers of Russia rejoiced, as the gains were announced in the papers, for it was *their* gold reserve; it was needed to make *their* industries stable. When they received a remittance from some friend in America, and had to pay ten per cent. to cash it, they grumbled a little; but their less lucky comrades laughed and told them they owed that much to the building of Russia. And when dollars jumped up and down on the Black Exchange, the workers laughed: "I wonder what the State Bank made on that transaction."

The rise and fall of the dollar caused no such sense of insecurity in Russia as it causes to-day in Germany. For their wages were reckoned in solid values; they were good for so much food and clothing. Their rooms, with light, water and heat, were controlled by the municipal governments with due regard to the condition of the workers. The price of foreign goods in dollars meant little to them, for Russia was not dependent, as Germany is, on food from abroad. The fall of the rouble became, for the Russian people, as the State Bank increased in strength, little more than an indirect tax on the money in people's pockets.

As the gold reserve increased, the Bank began

issuing bank-notes. Chervonetz is the name, an ancient Russian word for "gulden." It signifies red gold. These notes have better backing than those of any money system in the world, even better than American Federal Reserve dollars. One-third of their value is covered by gold, one-third by American or English money, and one-third commercial paper on goods in process of export or trade. Only a year ago they began to print these chervonetz; now they have issued one hundred and twenty million dollars worth. The law allows them to issue two hundred and fifty million dollars worth, with a gold backing of only twenty-five per cent.; but so far they have not availed themselves of this privilege, fearing depreciation.

Why, then, does the government of Russia keep on printing paper roubles? Because one hundred and twenty million dollars is not enough cash for the business of Russia. And because the government's yearly bills are bigger than its taxes. To cover this deficit money must still be printed, and this money, which is not backed by gold, goes steadily down. But this money is now only the small change of business. Month by month, the budget of the State comes nearer to an exact balance; month by month, also, the supply of gold money increases. In another year there will probably be only "good money" in Russia. She will be the first country in Europe to go completely on a gold basis.

I asked President Scheinmann what his training was for managing the State Bank of Russia. He laughed. "My job before the war was being a

revolutionist. . . . I am still a revolutionist," he added. "My assistants were formerly bankers and financial experts of the old régime in Russia. They put their financial knowledge at our disposal, for they are naturally interested in seeing any bank where they work prosper. I am personally interested, because as long as we must deal with foreign capitalists, our gold reserve is a source of stability and power."

We went to the dining-room where two thousand bank employés received each afternoon their main meal free. Everyone from president to scrub-women dined there. "Do the workers in the bank have anything to say about the bank's policy?" I asked.

"All conditions of labour are settled by agreement with the union," he answered. "This dining-room, the organisation of work, the rights of the workers. But the workers of the bank have nothing to say about the financial policy of the bank. That is settled by the workers of the nation."

I went from the bank to a Conference on Industry and Transport, where I saw the other side of the picture. They were denouncing the robber policy of the bank. They were trying to build a united programme for industry. But factory after factory was closing for lack of credits, while the State Bank asked two, three, four per cent. a month for loans.

"It isn't only the amount they ask, but the way they ask it," explained one of the heads in the Department of State Industries. "The control of the bank over industry is very intimate. This control

should be in the hands of men who have a policy for rebuilding industry, instead of merely a policy for making a gold reserve. The bank should serve industry, not industry the bank."

It is the old conflict that goes on everywhere in the world between industrial and financial capital. I had heard of it in the difficult columns of financial papers, but it never seemed clear and human till I saw it in Russia, where the heads of business and of banks alike can speak plainly, with cards on the table, since no private interests are at stake. I learned in this conference what the control of the money power in industry really means, in the intimate details of business.

The state-owned industries of Russia had organised a new bank, the Industrial Bank of Russia. Its stock was held by the industries, the railroads and the department of foreign trade. It was to be a bank to serve industry and build up a united programme for state-owned production.

"There is two hundred thousand dollars now in Germany," they gave as an example, "to the credit of the Clothing Industry of Russia. It was deposited by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. Now, we do not touch this money in Berlin, but because it is there, we give permission to the Textile Trust, which is also state-owned, to buy half a million dollars worth of wool in Australia. At the same time we order the Textile Trust, in return for this loan, to begin at once turning over cloth to the Clothing Trust. Thus we build up a united state-owned industry. We can do this be-

cause we are the bank where all these trusts do business.

"Suppose the miners in the Donetz Basin want clothing. They cannot pay at once, they must buy on installments. The mines of the Donetz ask us for credit, and we give it to them. Not in the form of paper roubles, but in the form of clothing for their miners. We can do this because we have power over the Clothing Trust which owes us money. We tell the Clothing Trust to send miners overalls to the Donetz and to wait three months for payment. They can afford to do this because we make the Textile Trust give them cloth. The Textile Trust can give them cloth because we allowed them to order raw wool from Australia. And all of this we did on that one deposit of credit in a bank in Berlin.

"We tell the mines of the Donetz that they must give coal to certain factories which produce enamelware cooking-dishes. And we order those factories to send $25,000 worth of cooking-dishes to the great Fur Fair at Irbit, Siberia, to trade for furs. These furs we allow the Fur Trust of the government to have, and they send them abroad and pay our bank back with money in London.

"That is the intimate control which a bank has in industry. The State Industries of Russia think that this control is too intimate to be placed in the Department of Finance, interested in building up a gold reserve. We think the united front of the state-owned industries is more important even than the gold reserve, and that the money power should

be in the hands of the Department of State Industries, who will use it to strengthen the relations between the various state-owned factories and trusts, till they grow strong and complete and capable of crowding out private capital altogether."

"We must be able to dictate." They both said it openly. Both the State Bank and the State Industries said it. "The money power dictates, and we want that power."

"We must be able to dictate," said the State Bank. "We will impose our will on every separate industry and get from it what we can. Thus we build up a surplus to be used as the Congress of Soviets, the workers' government of Russia, shall desire."

"We must be able to dictate," say the Industries. "For since our goal is a socialist state, we must strengthen Industry and not the Political Bureaucracy. The State as Organised Industry must flourish and the State as Bureaucracy must wither, till it handles only minor functions of mutual protection. Both administrative and financial power must be concentrated in Industry, which again is under the control of the workers. Thus we shall work out a united state-owned industry, the basis for socialism."

So they discuss the conflict, hotly and openly. In all these discussions there is one thing that never is suggested. No one thinks of giving the Money Power of Russia into private hands, as it is given in every other country in the world. Which of the various state departments shall hold it, that is the only question.

Every factory, every peasants' co-operative, every mine in Russia is hungry for credit, and the things which credit means in our capitalist world. For a long time to come there will be sharp discussion as to which of many pressing needs shall first be satisfied, which of different state departments shall be first strengthened and given power.

The gold reserve, or the united front of industry, —for which shall the Money Power be used? . . . "It is," said Trotsky to me, "a technical question of great importance, but not a question of final principle." . . . The workers in their unions, the Communists in their weekly meetings, discuss this question, this conflict between financial and industrial capital, as simply as I have told it in this chapter. They have learned by such open discussion, what the Money Power is, and what intimate control it has over industry and life. They may discuss in which state department it shall be lodged, but they do not dream of putting it, as other nations do, in private or foreign hands.

"Just as Morgan and Rockefeller and Gary, for all their individual differences, can combine to resist demands of the workers," laughed the head of a State trust to me, "so you can be quite sure that if any little scrap arises between Russia and foreign capital, we and Comrade Scheinmann of the State Bank will know how to act together. . . . If we didn't," he laughed again, "we are both under the same final boss. The Communist Party would make us."

V

THE STORY OF RUSSIAN OIL

In the great Oil Duel going on in the world to-day, making and unmaking boundary lines and empires, Russia holds the balance of power. She intends to develop her reserves for the benefit of her own people and not for the pleasure or prestige of any foreign nation. Foreign nations intend otherwise.

That is the story of Russian Oil,—a story of struggle, beginning six years ago and destined to continue for a generation,—a day by day struggle for control. This struggle was the big economic fact behind Genoa, behind The Hague, behind British, French and Italian intrigue in the Near East. It is even the story behind the Turkish conflicts. Kemal Pasha explains the reason for the struggle for the Dardanelles,—"This control is important because of Russian Oil."

One technical invention after another has brought Oil to a commanding position in the world to-day. The nation controlling Oil controls the seas and commerce of the world. The United States is to-day producing the greater part of the world's oil. But she produces wastefully, exhausting her reserves; within twenty years, at this rate, she will

have none left. The pleasure automobiles of America may have exploded into the air the oil on which control of the seas depends.

England has been more far-sighted. She saw that without reserves of oil, the British Empire was doomed. By financial power and political intrigue, by conferences and by armies, she has secured control of a large part of the oil reserves in the world. And now,—on the horizon appears Soviet Russia, who has more oil than anyone else.

The fields of Baku alone, in the part already worked and known, have a greater reserve than all the United States. Seven to eight billions of barrels is the lowest calculation of the oil still obtainable here. There is perhaps as much again in the peninsula around Baku, untouched and unworked.

North of Baku lies Grozny, a smaller field, but producing the best benzine in the world. It has oil so heavy in paraffin that the wells have been closed down to wait for adequate refineries. In Pennsylvania they call it paraffin oil if it has two per cent. paraffin; but Grozny paraffin oil has six to eight per cent. It is so stiff that they cannot pipe it, except in the midst of midsummer. It is so rich that they cannot use it.

In the great mountainous desert beyond the Caspian lies another oil district, the Ural Emba, discovered shortly before the war and little prospected. Fifty separate oil fields are known to exist in that 80,000 square kilometres of waste country, inhabited by nomad tribes and belonging without contest to the Russian government. Only two of these

fields have yet been opened, but already a billion barrels of oil are known to exist in Emba. In the end it is expected to prove even richer than Baku; and Baku is richer than the whole United States.

That's Russian Oil! No wonder England supported Denikin's army when she thought he had a chance to secure this prize. No wonder she abandoned him when he lost Baku. No wonder Standard Oil and Shell watch each other like hawks in their moves with Russia, so that the reported deal of Krassin with Shell was the bomb that wrecked the Genoa conference. The press of England still takes disproportionate interest in the little Soviet Republic of Georgia. Georgia is important as the port through which the oil of Baku reaches the outside world.

There are two stories of Russian Oil. The story of stocks and bonds and paper control, which goes on in Paris and London with occasional episodes at San Remo, Genoa and The Hague; and the story of workers and engineers in Baku, who never saw a stock or a bond. They are stories of two different worlds, and to each of them the other world is unreal and unknown.

Outside Russia, the great ones of earth have played with the paper control of the oil fields. England and France have signed treaties agreeing on what they would do with Russian Oil. English representatives have visited America, to agree on a joint programme between Shell and Standard Oil, and thus avoid friction between two great nations. "They are fighting over the hide of the Bear, and

the Bear is not yet killed," remark the Russian newspapers with cheerful cynicism.

The repeated, bitter demand from America and England for the recognition of "private property" in Russia has much to do with Russian Oil. Private property is quite secure to-day in Russia; and even regarding the foreign property damaged in the past, Russia offered at Genoa to discuss compensation for all foreigners who had actually lost money by her revolution. The foreign diplomats refused this basis of settlement; they demanded, not "compensation for losses," but complete return of properties.

What was the difference in meaning between these two phrases, which seem the same to the average citizen? This,—that after the revolution had seized the properties, their Russian owners, escaping to Paris, sold the stocks and bonds for a song.* Standard Oil and Shell are assumed to have bought large blocks. If the fields are restored, they get cheaply properties worth billions. If Russia gives only "compensation for losses," they will get nothing for these securities which they bought, in speculation, after the Revolution had declared them valueless.

The engineers and oil workers of Baku have never laid eyes on these paper shares that claim to own them. When I ask them if it is Shell or Standard that now claims title, they answer: "How do we know? We live in Baku."

In Baku was a story of battle and devastation.

*See "Oil," by DeLacey, for accounts of speculation and political intrigues in Paris.

Turkish and Armenian massacres. Revolution and counter-revolution. And through it all, the heroic struggle of hungry, half-clad engineers and workmen against floods that rose to overwhelm them, and fires that burned great gushers, and spying and sabotage of managers, and against the slow attrition of war and blockade and famine. They have seen the wells go down in production until it was feared they would be lost to the world under the waters of the Caspian. They have seen the tide turn and production climb upward, slowly, very slowly, but according to definite engineering plan. With the first coming of peace the change came. Now, after two years, they feel secure of the future.

I have spent two weeks in Baku. It is desolate, and as fascinating, as hell.

Three and a half days southward from Moscow, across the fertile fields of the Ukraine and beyond the Caucasus, just over the borders of Asia it lies, on the hot blue waters of the Caspian. An ancient Tartar town, with a thousand years of history behind it; the ruins of the old Khan's castle and mosque still stand on Baku hill. Up the narrow streets in the Tartar City the Mussulman women toil, drawing their veils across their faces with one hand and balancing heavy water-buckets with the other. At their feet lies a city brilliant with electric lights, full of giant refineries where a hundred streams of machine-oils pour constantly, day and night, winter and summer. Here is a modern power plant larger than any in Europe, sending current out to operate the distant fields. Here is modern indus-

trialism on a foundation of primitive Asia; workers whose dialects have hardly been reduced to writing, operating rotary oil-drills fresh from America.

As far as eye can see from the hills of Baku there are oil fields. I drove through them day after day. Oil fields on every horizon, forests of black shining derricks against blue skies or blue water, or in the smoky hollows of the hills. There is no green thing, for the mocking blue of the Caspian is salt; the only fresh water in Baku is brought from a hundred miles away, and is barely enough for drinking. So there are no trees in this desert country, except in one central spot, the beautiful Villa Petrolla, built for the high officials of the Nobel Oil Company to live in, and now occupied by four children's homes.

Under my feet I could hear the rumbling of a gusher, expected hourly in Bibi Eibat oil field, announcing its coming half a mile below the earth. Not far away is another famous gusher, which has delivered oil continuously for seven years, at a million barrels a year. From other derricks sounds the rattle of chains, as the rotary oil-drill, newly brought from America, whirls its way through sand and gravel hundreds of feet below. And down through the greasy dust of the fields creep little rivers of oil, olive-black with a green lustre, flowing towards the great reservoirs.

All the oil comes at last to the city of Baku, to the great refineries on the Bay. Here are pipe-lines leading to docks, and ships loading and unloading. Here is the largest refinery in Russia, once owned by Nobel, handling over a million barrels a

month and turning out eighty different kinds of oil products, benzines, kerosenes, machine oils, paraffins. The diamond white of twenty different weights of benzine pouring, pouring; the many-toned machine oils from golden to deep brown; the great vats of soapy oil, milky green in colour, followed by vats of "washed" oil, of a dead, dull slate; the black olive in pools and reservoirs of sluggish mazut, refuse still useful for fuel.

An industrial oil city, modern, mechanical, ruthless. In it live children orphaned by famine, and veiled women of the East, and men, Russians and Tartars and Persians and Armenians and the tribes of Central Asia who have not yet learned to read and write but who can produce oil for rebuilding a nation.

In the centre of Baku are the offices of Aznepth, the government oil trust, operating all the fields. The oil king of the district is Serebrovsky; it is he who has brought order out of chaos. He works twenty hours daily; he lives in two rooms up an iron stairway from a back court, a harder, bleaker life than tenement workers live in New York or London. His wife is dying of tuberculosis; it was lack of milk and eggs that slowly starved her. Only one little part of the price of rebuilding Baku.

There were 150 oil companies operating in Baku under the reign of the czar. The chief of them all was Nobel, a Swedish-Russian company, in which, even before the war, it was rumored that Standard Oil had bought control. Nobel had shares in many minor companies; he put forth fingers of trade

all over Russia in depots for the selling of oil, controlling the machinery of distribution.

When the Revolution came, Gustave Nobel called together his upper employés in Petrograd and gave them instructions before his departure. They were to remain in Russia and keep close to oil, sending out secret reports through Finland to Paris. In the wars of intervention they acted as economic spies. Using their knowledge of oil, and a show of friendliness, they secured high posts with the Soviet government, which was making use of any experts not openly hostile. One of them became manager of oil for the Petrograd district; another was in the college of technical management for all Russian oil.

They were the heads of a conspiracy that reached all over Russia, sending out weekly reports to Wrangel's Paris office, and receiving money from abroad. They held themselves ready, when the time came, to paralyse the oil industry and thus destroy Russia, burning up oil fields and oil reserves if necessary. This was the type of sabotage that Russia faced in every important industry. These oil spies were caught in the end by the Extraordinary Commission and condemned to be shot; but they were not shot, for they were foreigners.

While conspiracies like this raged through Russia, and while in Paris was a riot of speculation—widows and orphans and demi-mondaines staking the cost of bread or the price of lust for shares of Russian oil—the Baku oil workers themselves were cut off from Russia by a ring of steel. Armed force after armed force seized the wells and the country

round them; for four long years there was no settled life or peace.

The workers of Baku had always been revolutionary, since the uprising of 1905. It was in Baku that Krassin built an underground printing plant, the largest producer of illegal literature in Russia. . . . When the revolution came in 1917 the Baku workers took over the local government and declared the oil the property of the nation. There was very little conflict. The owners of Baku were thousands of miles away. Ninety per cent. of the lands belonged to the czar, and he was gone for months. The next owners were foreigners who had leased the lands; and they were abroad. Most of the local managers remained in the fields; they were engineers, chiefly Russian; they kept on with their work.

The first change made by the new control in Baku was a reorganisation of the fields. The 150 little companies, each with dozens of little claims scattered through many fields, were wasting the oil. They were competing with each other, trying to shift the floods to their neighbours, trying to bore their little claims all round the edges to drain their neighbour's oil. The engineers and workers knew that such competition was criminal; since there was now only one owner, the government, they organised the wells into eight great districts, under one central management in Baku. The lesser engineers remained in the districts; the higher engineers managed from Baku. The Oil Workers Union had its representatives in the management, in charge of supplies and personnel.

Immediately war struck them. The Germans and Turks came down from the north and established themselves in Tiflis, centre of the Caucasus. The English troops came up from Persia. The great ones of earth were bent on a race for Russian Oil. The old Russian army was breaking into wandering bands and going home; it was an army of tired, hungry peasants, to whom the revolution meant only a chance to rest and eat on their own home soil.

Race and religious feeling ran high in the oil fields, stimulated by so many opposing armies. The Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries declared the Soviet régime pro-German and set up a counter-revolution with the aid of two Cossack bandits, calling the British to help them. Under the encouragement of British advance, the Armenians massacred 25,000 Mohammedans in the town and fields of Baku. The English came in, took possession, and led forth from jail twenty-seven Communists who had previously governed Baku. They took them across the Caspian as prisoners and shot them down in the desert. Thus blood and iron ruled in Baku.

Swiftly the Turks retaliated for the massacres begun by the Armenians. Within two months they swept down into Baku from the north, while the English retired towards Persia. The Turks then massacred 30,000 Armenians. A month or so later came the armistice of the great war, and England told Turkey to clear out of Baku, as part of the price of defeat. All these shifts of power took place in a single year, and oil production dropped from

60,000,000 barrels in 1916 to 24,000,000 in 1918, the year of conflict.

For a year and a half the British held Baku, sharing control for a time with some Italian troops, as the Versailles treaty and the Supreme Council juggled with spheres of control in the Near East, but regaining exclusive control again. There was a fiction of an independent Azerbaijan government, which existed mainly for the purpose of being corrupted. No accounts indicate that it was very popular or had much independence.

When I visited the Caucasus, I found strong anti-British feeling. Engineers who were by no means fond of the Soviet government, said to me: "But at least the Bolsheviks freed us from the British." The officers of the Russian czarist fleet which had helped the British, began to grumble at the regulation which demanded of them a British visa to enter Baku. "Have we fought with our Russian brothers who went to school with us in the naval academies," they said, "in order that British should give us leave to enter a Russian port?"

The oil fields were declared private property again. There was a year and a half of relative peace. But oil production continued low, at 28,000,000 barrels. There were strikes, suppressed by tanks and armed force. The Russian market, to which most of the oil must go—since the pipeline to Batum and the outside world carries only kerosene—the Russian market was cut off by a ring of steel, and behind that ring Russia was fighting for her existence. The oil tanks of Baku filled to

overflowing, and in the earth storage reservoirs the oil spoiled from long contact with the soil. Oil clogged the sands and ran into the sea. And the floods in the unworked areas crept onward.

Somewhere, in the secret places of London and New York, there are people who know why the British government gave large credits to Nobel, based on future expectations, but allowed the smaller companies to go to the wall. The rumours in Baku said that the Anglo-Persian Company, controlled by the British government, had bought up shares of Nobel as the price for its aid, and was cornering the oil for England. The little companies were ruined; they were selling out cheap. Somewhere in London and New York it is known who bought them. When Litvinoff, in The Hague conference, asked for a list of the "creditors" to whom Russia must "restore property," it was this that he meant. The French newspapers denounced him for his impertinent curiosity.

Meantime, while Britain sat secure (more or less) in Baku, the armies of Denikin, financed by British gold and helped by the American Red Cross, drove northward, threatening the very centre of Russia during that darkest year of 1919. They captured the Grozny oil fields, where nine great gushers burned as the result of civil war. The gushers burned on for a year and a half, consuming wealth enough to pay one-fourth the annual state budget during the extravagant days of czarist Russia. This was one of the minor losses of civil strife.

Then, in the fall of the year, the Red Army

gathered strength, slowly organised out of broken, starving bands into one united control. Month by month through the winter Denikin was hammered back and when another spring came, the oil workers of Baku knew that the red soldiers were near on the borders of Azerbaijan. Promptly they revolted again, calling on Soviet Russia for aid.

It took less than an hour for the government to change hands. The red troops came down the railroad, took possession of the oil fields, declared them national property, and have held them ever since, from the 20th of April, 1920.

Some day the writers of historic romances will tell the tale fitly, how the half-fed, half-clad workers of Russia brought a fleet of cruisers and destroyers a thousand miles overland through the heart of Russia, to take possession of the Caspian Sea. From Petrograd up the Neva, through a chain of lakes and canals to the upper Volga, and down the great channel of Russia to the Caspian—that was the unheard of path they followed. It was an impossible feat—only one of many impossible feats done in that year of exhaustion by the besieged Russians. The British forces around the Caspian were completely routed. Their army in northern Persia was scattered and fled southward, expecting from week to week the announcement of a Soviet Persia. But Russia preferred Persia as a friendly buffer state; she drew her armies back, holding only the Caspian.

The oil fields were again in the hands of the Baku workers—what there was left of them.

The thirsty Russian market drank the oil reserves with speed. The storage tanks opened northward and the tank steamers on the Caspian, spurred on by extra food for the workers, made record deliveries. But oil production sank still farther. Drills were lacking, and machinery, and ropes and clothes and shoes and food. Exhausted Russia, struggling now against the combined attacks of Wrangel and Poland, could absorb the Baku oil with joy, but could give nothing back to the Baku workers. The floods crept onward; it seemed that the oil fields would be lost altogether to the world.

"We are at the lowest point yet reached," cried the Fuel Administration in warning. "In January we had 1,779 wells, only half the normal number. By September we had only 845. The floods take now the nature of a tempest. Over ninety per cent. of the liquid got out is water. There are 40,000,000 to 50,000,000 tons excess water in the district. The whole Baku fields, richest in the world, are threatened with ruin."

And then—came peace. But with the peace, the greatest famine the world has known. Yet famine was less disorganising than war. The blockade was broken; the most necessary material could be bought abroad. Even during the year of the great drought, Russia's industries began to improve.

The engineers of oil drew up a plan, a month by month programme for reconstructing the fields. It was a plan to rebuild the oil district out of its own resources. Gradually, slowly, repairing machinery

in old wells, digging new ones, buying equipment piece by piece as there was money.

It takes a long time and much capital to build an oil district. Wells must be dug, hundreds of wells, for months before returns come in. The average life of a well is five years; most of the Baku wells wore out in war-time. Wells not steadily worked fill slowly with water, requiring long, wasteful labour to bail them free again. During that first year of peace, Russia was eager to grant concessions in oil fields. She doubted the strength of her oil workers to reconstruct them again.

But step by step for two years and a half the programme has been fulfilled. Baku has produced 122 per cent. of the programme demanded, Grozny 103 per cent., and Emba 115 per cent. The oil workers are doing better than the engineers had expected. Millions of dollars worth of oil and oil products have been sold abroad already, and the proceeds put into new wells and new equipment. One hundred and fifty-seven new wells were being dug when I was in Baku. By 1925 they will reach normal production and will then go forward to surpass prewar.

"Within the next five years," says Krassin, chief of foreign trade in Russia, and himself an engineer of prominence trained in the Baku district, "our export of oil will without doubt exceed the prewar export."

The difficult, conflicting demands of the year of transition to the new economic policy in oil, are shown picturesquely in the letters of complaint sent

by Serebrovsky to the newspapers of Moscow. Under the régime of "war communism" Russia took the oil without payment, supplying the workers, as far as she was able, with food and clothing. Under the new policy, industries were to be self-supporting, but the division line between industries was not yet worked out. For a year and a half, during the transition period, many great government departments wished to finance themselves from Russian Oil.

The oil industry itself possessed at first no legal right to sell oil, but was forced to turn its product over to the All-Russian Co-operatives, or the Department of Food Supply, or the Department of Foreign Trade. These organisations, struggling under severe emergencies, sold the oil and used the proceeds, not to re-equip the oil fields, but for other pressing needs.

Bitterly caustic was the appeal sent by Serebrovsky on behalf of the oil workers of Baku, printed early in 1922 in the Moscow *Isvestia*. "Who doesn't want to trade with our oil, anyway? Only the dead ones. But nobody wants to remember that we who produce it need food, shoes, clothes, everything. We must beg for the right to exchange a couple of poods of oil for poods of flour. We shiver at the very mention of the Department of Foreign Trade.

"Then they begin to tell us how much better a concessionaire could manage the oil fields. At this we really grow wild. Of course the concessionaire is great and we are pitiful. He can sell his oil and from us they merely take it away. He can clothe

his workers, and we have to persuade them that they are clothed. He can bring from abroad everything that he requires, while to us they promise now for the third year reservoirs, generators and electrical equipment. He has money and credit, while we have't a dead cent except rusty kerosene cans.

"But—the impudent thought—suppose the Congress should make us equal in rights with the concessionaire. And should tell the Department of Finance not to take away the little money we have, and the Food Commissariat not to take our oil for nothing (for money we'll give it gladly) and the Department of Foreign Trade to let us sell oil abroad—for ourselves and not for the benefit of the Department of Foreign Trade. . . . Then our trading department would put forth fingers in the same way that Nobel had it. Part of our production we'll give to the State—we also are loyal state people—but we'll keep enough to buy what we need for the industry.

"Give us the rights of the concessionaire and you will need no other concessionaire than the Baku workers."

Out of these conflicting claims in the industries of Russia a coherent plan was gradually built. The oil industry is now organised as an independent unit. Under the Department of National Industries comes the Fuel Administration; under the Fuel Administration comes the oil management, appointing the chief engineers for the three different oil districts. These engineers have absolute control of production, subject to the labour agreement which they

make with the Oil Workers Union. That is the simple organisation for the production of oil.

The sale of oil is equally simple in form. Each of the three great districts selects directors in an oil syndicate, which controls the marketing of oil in Russia. The Fuel Administration in Moscow appoints the chairman. They have branches all over Russia for the sale of oil. Thirty per cent. royalty goes to the central treasury of the State; the rest returns to the oil industry. But the oil industry itself is an organ of the State, an independent self-sustaining organ whose profits in the future shall be used as the people of Russia determine. For the present those profits are to rebuild the industry and to improve the life of the Baku oil workers.

Wages in Baku are still low in money. When I visited that city in April, 1922, they ranged from $6 a month for apprentices to $40 a month for the highest engineers. Now they are doubtless much higher; for all over Russia wages have been going up rapidly. The low money wage marked the time of transition from rations to money; Russia had as yet little money to pay with. At the time of my visit there were no more free rations, but a worker with family secured his basic food supply through the oil workers' co-operatives for about $3 a month. The buying was done on a large scale by the oil company, which helped finance the co-operatives as they struggled to their feet.

In addition to wages, the union contract called also for free lodging, free fuel, free water and

electric light. Hundreds of new houses were going up in Baku to relieve the over-crowding. In individual standard of living, the secretary of the union told me, in such things as clothes and furniture and housing—they had not yet reached prewar. But in social opportunity, in chances for culture and education and fellowship and hospital care in illness, they were already infinitely better off than before.

Education, health, the entire social life, of the workers was also temporarily financed by Aznepth, the government oil company. The first demands of the unions were not for higher wages, but for large funds set aside for joint social progress and protection. Aznepth was required by union agreement to put an amount equal to thirty-two per cent. of its wage scale into hospital, school and other social funds. The schools for the oil workers' children had grown from twenty-two to sixty-two; there were fourteen kindergartens where none had existed before; a dozen day nurseries and fifteen homes for famine orphans. Eventually, these would be taken over by the school authorities of Baku; but until those authorities were strong, the oil company organised and financed them.

For the older workers there were 121 classes for reading and writing, and twenty-five libraries. There were eight factory schools where apprentices work four hours and study four. There was a technical university where a simple Tartar oil worker, studying his way upward from the first course in reading, might finish at last as a qualified engineer. There

were thirty workers' clubs, each with its stage, dance hall and entertainments. During my visit they were giving entertainments to raise money for the German workers on the Ruhr. They didn't think of themselves as paupers; they had built already a flourishing social life.

They have control of their lives in certain ways unknown even to American workers. The problem arose, about the time of my visit, of cutting down an office staff which was too large for the oil industry. Ever since the Revolution, Aznepth had been carrying the weight of all the office workers of the old oil companies; they were not needed in the new reorganisation, but neither could they be fired without serious suffering. Now the time had come when the union agreed that they should be dropped. The question which workers should be dismissed was handled by a committee of three—the manager, the secretary of the union, and the president of the city government. The manager's task was to save the most efficient workmen; the union secretary protected the heads of families; the president of the city council planned, as far as possible, for transfer of these workers to jobs in public services. There was no reckless slashing of the payroll, without regard to the human lives involved.

Thus, step by step, the oil workers and engineers of Baku are rebuilding the oil industry, and making it the foundation for a wholesome community life, and for a reserve of power for Russia. Under this new form of organisation, what chance has

foreign capital in Russian oil? Many chances for making money; no chance for controlling politics.

I have been present at many discussions of concessions. They may take many forms. Over in Ural Emba are new fields waiting development; the concession I heard planned for Ural Emba required a capital of $30,000,000 for wells and storage and pipe-lines, before any returns would come in. Within ten years the profits would be tens of millions, and the contract might run for thirty years.

In a new field like this, a foreign company would be allowed independent rights of development. But only a big company could handle a field like this. "We will not allow the methods that have wrecked American oil fields," said the chairman of the concessions committee to me. "We will not permit a host of little companies, competing with each other, and wasting the oil. We demand that a concessionaire shall have enough capital to develop the district properly, with all the pipes and transport necessary. This, in the Ural Emba, is $30,000,000 for first investment. . . . In fields where great gushers are to be expected, we demand that the concessionaire provide adequate storage tanks, that the oil may not be wasted. He must provide protection against fires and floods. He must have a plan for working the whole field rationally. Sound oil companies, wishing to develop an industry, can make big money from Russian oil. But wildcat companies, interested in quick returns on a little capital, to make a showing and sell out to the public—for these our leases offer no inducements."

Smaller companies, unable to develop a whole field from their own capital, can take other forms of concessions in Russian oil. The Barnsdell International Corporation, at present working in Baku, is an example of a contract much favoured by Russia. The American company brings in machinery and administrative ability and digs wells on a contract with Aznepth, receiving for its work a percentage of the oil. The members of the company whom I met in Baku told me they had been received with tremendous enthusiasm.

When foreigners go to Baku or to other concessions in Russia, these are the conditions that they meet: government managers, over-worked, wearing themselves out in building a new Russia; workers who are still on low wages but who are politically independent, economically well organised, full of the purpose that industry shall increase in wealth and raise the general standard of living as it increases.

These managers hail with joy a capitalist who comes as partner to make industry more efficient. These workers greet happily the thought of American methods and American standards. But neither managers nor workers want men who dabble in politics, or attempt to make of them a subject nation, as has been done throughout history with the peoples of undeveloped lands.

Meantime the owners of stocks and bonds in the old Russian oil companies, speculate with their paper control in Paris and London, and demand that the wells be given back to them. They do not realise that most of the wells they owned have long since

died under the floods of the Caspian. And that to resurrect those companies again would be as impossible as unscrambling an omelet.

For the great forces of life, that sweep forward by months or by ages, wiping out cities and civilisations and building new ones, have carried the workers of Baku into a different world. They have seen a half dozen armies of occupation. They have seen massacres of tens of thousands. They have fought back floods and fires. Half-starved and with bare hands in place of equipment, they have begun the rebuilding of a wrecked industry. And now, when there is again hope in Baku, and peace, and increasing production, wrought through the agony of body and brain—they have not the faintest idea of returning the wells to the nations whose armies helped wreck them. They are building for the future in Baku and not on the past.

VI

THE BREAD BASKET OF EUROPE

"THE Russian peasant may be ignorant and poor and starved at present, but he has a darned sight better prospects ahead of him than any farmer in the world, when once he gets going." . . . Such was the startling judgment pronounced in my hearing by a group of American farmer boys who had been working all summer in the famine area of Russia.

Some of them had travelled half across Siberia, and down for many days into the Bashkir Republic. They had seen the Russian peasant and Russian agriculture with the eyes, not of politicians, nor of revolutionists, nor even of city workers, but with the eyes of North Dakota farmers appraising the greatest wheat-lands in the world.

They did not ignore the terrible famine from which the peasant has hardly yet emerged; nor the lack of equipment and livestock, the illiteracy, the painfully primitive methods. They were not envying the Russian peasant's present condition, but his chance for the future. The ills he endures are those which education and machinery will cure. His prospects are based on the resources of his land, the new land laws, and the new human being produced by the Revolution.

From the middle of Europe to more than the

middle of Asia it stretches,—this country of great dry plains. For thousands of years, before the earliest dawn of history, it has been the home of the great nomad races, who swept across its easy highway from the north of China even to Rome and Spain. It is still the last stronghold of these nomads, and holds in its sweep many races that have not yet settled down to agriculture, and much black soil that has never felt the plough. Yet it is flat and easy to farm, rich earth that produces abundantly. It has one drawback, aside from the temporary ones which the disorganisation of man has created, it is very dry. The average rainfall is from ten to twenty inches in the summer six months. One-third of the years are "bad" years under the primitive methods of cultivation, which lack all means of moisture conservation. The peasant ploughing is late and shallow; he turns the soil over late in June and lets it dry out before planting. Every few years there is a famine. The greatest famine in history is barely over.

In good years it has been the bread basket of Europe, in spite of primitive methods of cultivation and transport. From the labour of its illiterate peasants have arisen thousands of snugly built villages, and hundreds of little towns with gold-domed churches, and many million-dollar grain elevators along the railroad tracks. The population throughout the European section is more dense than America's middle west, comparing rather with Ohio and western New York. This population has supported itself and a hierarchy of nobles by scratching less

than half the arable land with home-made ploughs, and reaping the results with hand sickles and carting the grain to market in springless carts over scores of miles of dirt roads.

If once there is machinery, if once there is knowledge and organisation, if once they are freed from the drain of war here in this region where millions died last year of hunger,—there need be no hunger in the world.

"You must not think," said a young girl who before the war was heiress to a large estate near Samara, but who is now travelling from village to village working for the government,—"you must not think that our disorganisation is produced by the Revolution. Russia never was organised."

I have travelled myself as far north as the Arctic, and as far east as the Volga; I have slept in peasants' houses and attended the meetings of their committees and soviets. But when I met these American farmers in Moscow I realised that I had grown too accustomed to European standards to see the Russian farm lands freshly. I tried to see this bread basket of Europe through their eyes,—the eyes of the most highly-trained farmers in the world, the large scale machine farmers of our own great plains.

"The first thing I saw in Latvia," said Harold Ware, leader of the group, "was a man pulling a plough and a woman guiding it. This was our first introduction to European agriculture; not one of us had known that peasant farming was like that.

"The boys all said: 'Look at the onion patches!'

They meant the little peasant plots of grain, which were then six inches high in early spring. They were such small plots, divided into so many sections, that our boys from the grain-fields of Dakota laughed at them as onion-beds.

"From that time we saw throughout Russia a terrible poverty in equipment. There were home-made ploughs with a piece of sheet-iron for a mouldboard; and we were used to the chilled steel, highly polished mouldboards of the tractor ploughs that get a surface just like glass. Once in a while a peasant would show us with pride one of these little German ploughs with their straight iron shares; well, we'd have to admire, but we knew we wouldn't have taken one of those things for a gift.

"We saw in Libau warehouses stacked with this type of plough, made before the war. Clear across Siberia we saw, here and there, this same German type, which had been copied and made by a Russian factory. Very old-style things, and even of these there were only a few. Most of the ploughs were home-made. We began to wonder if the most immediate help to Russia, instead of our tractor ploughing, wouldn't be to give them a lot of good walking-ploughs for one or two horses, and scatter them over the land. They need them by millions, sold on easy payments to the peasants; and it would certainly save the horse-power that is so scarce.

"Later in the season we saw the harvesting; practically all of it was done by sickle. I don't believe we ever had that stage in America; it must have been before the days of the Pilgrim Fathers. We

started with scythes, and went on to cradles and reapers and binders, and now the big modern combination machine. But in Russia we saw only sickles, and once in a long time a reaper. These last were mostly idle for want of horses or for lack of a few repairs that the peasants did not know how to make.

"In the summer when we were ploughing with tractors the women were reaping alongside us with sickles. We told them that next summer they would not need to bend their backs when we came with modern threshing machinery from America to reap their grain."

The estate near Perm on which the American farmers did ploughing last summer belonged before the Revolution to an absentee prince. He collected its revenues through an agent. There were no buildings and no machinery on the estate; the methods of agriculture were not better than those of the surrounding peasants. In fact, it was the nearby peasants who did the work, according to the ways they knew and with no instruction. They obtained their own land from the prince, and in return had to work an equal amount of his land. The small plots, the three-field system, the hand tools, were merely transferred from their own land to his. The prince did nothing to develop the estate, he merely exploited his monopoly of land.

When the Revolution came there was no sudden upheaval here among the peasants. But the agent, feeling no longer at his back the protection of the czar's army, grew frightened and left in the night.

There was no special date when any land was "taken over." But the following spring the peasants, instead of planting the estate for the use of the prince, planted it for themselves. Not all of it; they had neither strength nor seed for all; each man picked out little patches of good soil that he remembered and established squatters' rights by ploughing there.

It happened this way in many places in Russia. In other places there were owners dispossessed by violence and well-managed estates, with well-balanced live-stock, split up and ruined by division. But there were also many informal takings over of land, as the peasants did at Toikino near Perm. After a time the central government began to pass land laws. It passed a law making all large estates the property of the government, only to be subdivided by due process of law. But the government was occupied with war and the peasants did pretty largely as they chose.

Even this past summer there were little patches of rye growing all over the large estate, planted by the peasants on land which belonged to the Soviet Farm, and which was now legally the property of an organisation of miners, to be run to produce food for the mines. As long as the miners were unable to use the land the peasant right held good. Ability to use and improve land is the test imposed now, even by the formal land laws,—as it was to some extent in America's early homestead laws.

But if the taking over of the land was in many cases without trouble, the later fortunes of the peasants were not. In almost every section of this

vast fertile land there has been war, repeated again and again. The requisition of livestock first by the czar, through three years of fighting, and then by Kerensky; the sweeping of armies, Kolchak in the east, Denikin and Wrangel in the south, the Poles in the west, the forces of Yudenich to the north,—these things left the villages and fields desolate.

The old peasant woman who led the singing in Starashemya, in the government of Perm, could look out across the fields every evening at sundown as she came home from toil, and see the trench where her son was killed fighting. A Russian-American farmer, who went to visit his old village near Kiev, came back to tell that his four sisters had all lost their husbands, and that there was no young man in the village. One of these places was in the northeast and one in the southwest of Russia; death was in all places alike.

The first effect of the war was to disorganise agriculture still farther, by the drafting of men, the requisition of cattle, the wearing out of machinery and implements. Then came three years of drought, ending in the dryest year known in history. The Bread Basket of Europe was reduced to emptiness. The peasants fled by hundreds of thousands and died by millions.

A year ago it seemed that this whole fertile section of Europe and Asia might be reduced to a desert. But to-day the tide has turned. There have been two average harvests; there has been terrific nation-wide effort, helped by much foreign relief. In one year the government gave seven hundred thou-

sand tons of seed grain for the areas which had none. Twenty-five million dollars worth of agricultural credits were also advanced by the government in this most difficult year to buy agricultural machinery. For two years the food tax in the stricken area was remitted, and half a million orphans were taken care of by the children's homes of the overburdened land. America also came to the refuge and fed eight million people.

Great fights went on all summer against pests and parasites, which came upon the fields after the famine. Eight million acres were occupied by locusts and an equal number by a small ground animal called sooslik. But the peasants, mobilized under experts from the Department of Agriculture, fought the locusts with flaming oil, burning whole fields of vegetation and pests together. There are still locust eggs on millions of acres and the fight starts again in the spring.

But at least there is food in the land again, not much, but enough to give hope. So it is possible now to take a brief survey of the Bread Basket of Europe and ask what its prospects are.

Horses throughout Russia are now only forty per cent. of prewar, reports the Department of Agriculture to Congress. In the famine area the total number of cattle is thirteen to twenty-five per cent. of prewar; in Siberia it is thirty per cent.

Over against this is the report that last autumn's planting of grain was twenty-six per cent. higher than the preceding year, in spite of the grievous lack of implements and livestock. This was due to the

tremendous efforts of both peasants and government, encouraged by the better harvest.

So much for material conditions. But the real hope for the future lies rather in the changed spirit of the peasant, made possible by the changed conditions under which he holds his land and governs his country.

It is universal testimony that the peasants are all interested in machinery now, whereas before the war they were superstitious about it. A mechanic from Tambov, who before the war worked for the International Harvester Company, says that he used to drive into villages which had never seen an automobile. "The old men and women would come out with their ikons," he said, "to take off the curse of my coming. A tractor would have been even worse in their eyes, because a tractor tears up the earth."

And now these same peasants are learning to run tractors, and asking how they can get them. Forty of them were trained by the American Tractor Unit this summer. "They learned as well," said Ware, "as an American farmer would. They sent delegations from seventy to a hundred miles to see our machines. Yet they used to believe, the old peasants told me, that machinery poisoned the earth. If I had gone into their villages with tractors before the war they say I might have suffered violence."

The peasants are interested in all sorts of new inventions. The same mechanic from Tambov tells of a scythe that a peasant brought to him, asking for a new one. "He had no idea the old one

could be repaired, but I fixed it in five minutes by acetylene welding and reground the edge. He looked as if he had seen a miracle done by Jesus Christ. Next day they came from all over, bringing all their old implements to be mended."

A new status has come to the peasant with the Revolution, and a new self-respect. His village soviet is a centre from which word goes up to Moscow, and to which news comes back. Men of his own kind, from his own village, are sent by him up to the capital to sit in the All-Russian Congress and pass the laws. And they come back and explain what they have done, and if he doesn't like it he recalls them.

From one end of Russia to the other the villages are after one pattern. There is a central street, without curbing or definite bounds, merging at each end into the road that runs to the next village. The houses open, not on the road, but each into its own barnyard, where the livestock and the implements are housed at night. Somewhere outside the village is the common pasture where the village herdsmen look after all the cows together, and farther away, often many miles, are the lands which the peasants farm.

In every village is one house which is known as the Soviet House. Here are all records of births and deaths and property; here meet all committees and officials. Whenever I have come into a village and called to the first small boy, he has directed me to this house for all my information. And the whole village turns out and crowds into the building or at

the approaches to know what the news is and to express itself on it.

If you ask them to form a committee they do it with common voice. There is no balloting and counting of bare majorities; there is usually a unanimous decision. Again and again I have formed famine relief committees in less than an hour, merely telling the entire village group what sort of work was to be done and what different kinds of people were wanted on the committee, and receiving in reply one name after another, almost always by general voice or consent.

Even in the midst of starvation these villages displayed a surprising ability to organise their own life. In September, 1921, when the famine was only a month old, I visited seven villages, one after the other, and found in each a self-help committee and a kitchen already built for the feeding of hundreds of children, lacking only the food. This had been done because President Kalenin told them that food would come from Moscow and also perhaps from America and that the villages which were organised and ready would first be fed.

It was a great trip which Kalenin made at the beginning of the famine to bring order out of the chaos of fleeing peasants. He sat in the midst of the villagers and the old women told him their complaints against the drought, the tax-collectors and the government. It was no easy optimism he gave them. "Thousands of you must die," that was his iron message. "If you organise and fight some of you will live, but if you make no struggle, you will

all perish." That was the message to which the peasants of Russia responded, staying in their villages and planting their grain and organising their kitchens while yet they were eating grass and bark and clay.

And now Kalenin, the president of Russia, himself a peasant, receives daily in his office hundreds of peasants, who come from all over Russia to bring their problems to Moscow. He refers them to the proper departments, he writes little orders for them, he ties them up with the central machinery of Russia.

All over the land there have sprung up "Houses of the Peasants," where information of farming and village life and government is given out. In Moscow the House of the Peasants has 400 beds and many baths, hospital and disinfection service, reading room and library and theatre, and exhibition of agricultural machinery and models of barns and village fire-fighting equipment. An information bureau connects the peasants with the official institutions; a legal bureau gives them information on land laws; a trade bureau takes care of their sales and purchases.

There are twenty such Houses of the Peasants in the main cities of Russia, and there are hundreds of smaller houses in the smaller towns. The Ukraine alone reports four hundred Houses of the Peasants, which combine the function of hotel and information bureau and educational institution.

Scattered throughout the land are two or three thousand soviet farms, old estates which are taken

over directly by the government, and not divided among the peasants. At present these are mere stations for emergency food production, little better than the peasant lands around them, but as peasant production returns to normal these soviet farms may naturally become the agricultural experiment stations of Russia.

But it is the new law of land that really makes the difference in the peasants' outlook. Not that he has so much more land than he had before, although it is true that a million acres were given by the revolution to the peasants of European Russia alone. His holdings increased from fifty to one hundred per cent., but even now nearly half the lands of Russia are in holdings which give less than three acres for each person in the family. Twenty acres or less is the holding of the vast majority of Russian peasants. But this is distinctly more than he can work at present, in the absence of livestock and tools.

The new land laws ensure him his holding as long as he works it. It can neither be sold nor mortgaged; it belongs ultimately to the government; the peasant has the right of perpetual use, which cannot be taken from him by any misfortune. In return for this he pays a food tax, amounting to somewhat more than one tenth of his crop.

It is a rather complicated affair, this food tax, taking into account the size of his holding and the number of children in his family, the crop conditions in the township and the amount of his livestock. A man with a very small holding and poor

harvest and no cattle may escape payment altogether, while a man who has more than seven acres for each member of his family and many cattle and a fair harvest may have to pay as high as one-fifth of his grain crop. But for the average peasant it is ten to fifteen per cent.

The laws also provide that each village may decide according to what method the land is to be farmed,—the old communal system, the individual farm or a system of co-operative large-scale farming. The old communal plan is very wasteful; it had a certain primitive justice to recommend it, for it gave to each man his share of the good land, the bad land, the hilly land, the swampy land, the near land, the distant land. He might have as many as twenty-seven tiny plots of land, widely scattered; it may have been fair, but it was highly inefficient.

Redistribution of land in the interests of efficiency is rapidly taking place. In some villages individual farms may come in, but the system the government encourages, and for which it advances credits, is large-scale, co-operative farming by machinery. The peasant is accustomed to the idea of a common pasture. Even the land which they farmed so painfully by strips was common property, redistributed from time to time, but separately worked because of the nature of their implements. It is not difficult for them, with modern machinery, to think in terms of a common grain field.

Great grain fields, operated by whole villages in common, shipping their products by government railways and warehouses direct to the large govern-

ment industries, and receiving goods in return through the peasants' co-operatives,—this is the aim of Russia. It needs education, it needs machinery, it needs organisation, but these are the only things it needs. It does not need to batter down any private interests that stand in the way. That is why those American farmers said that the peasants of Russia had a better chance than the mortgaged farmers of North Dakota or the tenant farmers of the South or the agricultural migratory workers who follow our harvest in the West.

Machinery will come more quickly in Russia than it came in the American West. In place of a hundred years it will be only a decade from sickle to modern threshing machine. This means that the migration of population from farms to cities, which in America took a century, will be hastened in Russia and will greatly strain her capacity for adjustment.

Yet Russia desires this shift of population to develop her industries, both those she has had in the past and those she has never yet had. If Russia receives credits, if she is able to develop her heavy industries, to produce machinery and manufactured articles, and to absorb the peasants displaced by machines from the farms which will then be too small,—then there will be a normal and self-contained advance towards prosperity over the whole of the country.

Russia's trade then with the rest of the world will be under no abnormal pressure in any particular kind of commodities. Her interest will be in

internal expansion, which will absorb her energies, as the energies of America were absorbed in westward expansion during the century when she was the self-contained and non-aggressive example of peace and prosperity to the world.

If Russia gets no credits, then, as one of her foremost leaders said to me, "We shall starve ourselves and export our grain to Europe. Even this year, in spite of our own hunger, we are exporting a little because we have such need of manufactured goods. Next year we shall export more. We shall then become competitors of the American farmers in the grain markets of the world. We shall be forced to do this out of our very poverty unless we have the credits to develop industry and to consume our own surplus in building up a self-sustaining and many-sided nation."

VII

HOW MOSCOW KEEPS HOUSE

A CITY which runs its street repairs and its housing, its sewers and bridges and car-line under one Department of Community Housekeeping, and makes it pay for itself without taxes,—that's Moscow in 1923. "We have to do it," said Sovietnikof, head of the department, to me. "We haven't any other income. We have to make ourselves self-supporting under the new economic policy."

The rents from the shops and market booths come into the city treasury, for all these things since the revolution are municipal property,—and buy 120,000 square yards of flower beds in parks and boulevards for the delight of the populace, and pave 100,000 square yards of cobblestone pavements, and are used to repair the water works and the gas works and the broken bridges, even out in the country on the roads which the peasants use when they drive into market.

As for house rents,—the city does not expect much money from these as yet. All that it asks is that house rents shall pay for repairs on the ruined buildings and so reconstruct the city again into a good place to live in for the millions of inhabitants who have poured in since the war. So house rents are calculated by house committees and depend on

the kind of job you work at and the size of your income, so that the working man is undercharged and the "nep-man" is overcharged with more than his proportion of repairs.

That's the way the City of Moscow, as well as other cities of Russia, keep house under the new economic policy.

I came to the Department of Community Housekeeping by a long, hard, roundabout way. I was hunting a room to live in, for rooms are very scarce. You can get them, theoretically, in various ways, but all of these ways are hard. I ran into three kinds of people in my search,—greedy speculators, complaining aristocrats, and working people.

My first greedy speculator was a pretty woman with a pleasant smile. She looked like a comfortable boarding-house keeper, not a greedy speculator at all. She offered me a kitchen, made into a bedroom, for twelve dollars a week, with tea in the morning and dinner at night. It was the cheapest thing I had found in the expensive city of Moscow, so I grabbed it.

"I shall have to see the House Committee," she said, a trifle uneasily.—My friend explained after we left.

"Those rooms belong legally," she said, "not to that woman, but to the city, which farms out its rights to the various house committees chosen in each house. This woman has gained her rights by

buying out previous tenants, but after all, they had only the right to live there, not the right to sell.

"As soon as she admits to the House Committee that she has extra rooms, they have the right to move in tenants from more crowded quarters without paying her any rent at all. However, no doubt she has friends on the committee or she wouldn't be going into this business. I think you'll get your room."

But I didn't. Not because the House Committee objected, but because the woman learned that I was an American and began to raise her prices. When it reached twenty dollars for the first week, subject to change thereafter, I gave it up. "I shall have no safeguard at all," I complained to my friend.

"On the contrary, it is the woman who will have no safeguard. If once you move into that room and register your name and occupation with the House Committee she cannot put you out. You can refuse to pay her any rent at all, and her only redress is to take out the furniture. The furniture is legally hers, but the room is not. Your legal rights are better than hers if you once get in. You are a worker and she is a speculator. You can deal direct with the House Committee, paying their nominal rent of fifty cents a month, if once you establish a residence.

"She knows all this and that is why she cannot make up her mind what she wants to do. She is on dangerous ground, speculating in rooms which are not legally hers." Later I met some of the larger speculators, who had obtained legal rights direct

from the city by making repairs. But that is a later story.

Four flights up, across the hall, I learned, was a room which was to let for the summer. I went to inspect it. It was inhabited by complaining aristocrats.

It was a large room, once beautiful, but now jammed from wall to wall with furniture and looking like a second-hand junk shop. Wardrobes shoved against wardrobes, divans; beds, desks, dishes, and at least a dozen gilt chandeliers piled in a corner. Over all was an atmosphere of dust.

The lady reclined on the divan and spoke in French. She complained that the room was badly crowded, but what could she do. Once the whole flat was hers, properly furnished. Then the unspeakable proletariat moved in from the gutters and only allowed her to keep one room. She kept the largest and piled in it all her furniture. Surely she would not let those creatures use her furniture.

So she had camped down in the midst of her possessions, living in a horrible mess of luxurious dirt. She had never learned how to clean house, and she could not afford a servant. She half boasted, half complained that she never had cooked a meal in her life before the Revolution. Now she had a kerosene primus, set in the midst of the room on a marble-topped table. She was in terror even of this little stove for she did not understand its flaming. She was an utterly useless person, trained for a kind of culture that no longer exists in Russia.

I let her waste my time four days, so desperate

was I to secure any kind of a room. She changed her mind hourly, according to the rise in railway fares to the place she wanted to visit. In the end I gave up in despair.

Then a friend brought me hope. "I know a woman," he said, "who lives in the Metropole. She has two rooms and her husband is away in Berlin. I think she would take you in."

Would she? She did it as casually as she would offer a drink of water, without even seeing me. She was a busy Communist, working in a government office. Her room was merely the place where she dropped down to sleep occasionally; she had not two minutes time to give to the choosing of a room-mate. "Come round between nine and ten to-morrow," she sent me word, "and I'll give you a bed."

Thus casually I came to live in the Metropole, the hotel used by the All Russian Central Executive Committee to house its employés. "The house of officialdom," said my newspaper friends. "Take note how these bureaucrats live." I took notes.

My hostess welcomed me with a hurried, friendly smile. The auto was waiting to take her to the office. "You can have the bed in this room," she said, "and the table in the other room to work on."

I sat down on the bed and struck it with a hard bump. I lifted the mattress and found I was sitting on boards, with a thin straw-mattress laid over them. Such was her bed also; it was the only kind of bed I found in the Metropole. The springs had long since worn out and been replaced by rough lumber. Nobody in the Metropole had time to

think about beds; they were too busy running Russia.

I looked for a place to hang my coat. There was neither wardrobe nor closet. I watched to see where my hostess hung her clothes, and found it,—four nails driven behind the door of the inner room. She saw the direction of my gaze and caught my inquiry. Swiftly she picked up a hammer and drove in two more nails for my clothes. I winced as the iron bit into the fine hard wood in what was once one of Moscow's best hotels. But she had her job to think of, more important than a bit of woodwork. She hurried to the automobile and was carried away.

It was after midnight when she returned from the office. She drew up a chair to the table, turned on a desk-lamp and began to work some more. She was somebody's assistant, high up in the government publications. They had gone on the new economic policy and were making feverish advance in publishing books. It was after three o'clock when she went to bed.

So began my life in the heart of officialdom in Moscow. I began to understand why she offered me only a bed and table. It was all she herself asked of life. Her bedtime averaged two o'clock in the morning, her working time all the rest of the day. Some evenings there would be a little relaxation, a group of comrades, sitting around the table, drinking tea and discussing the problems of Russia. All her life revolved around her job.

The plans for meals were very sketchy. Some time in the morning a barefoot peasant woman brought us a samovar and we had tea. Some time

in the evening we came in and rustled for food for ourselves. Any friends were welcome to the flat to sleep or to eat. If someone got there first and consumed the bread we ate something else or did without till next day. After a time I learned to go to sleep at night, leaving the doors wide open, and never knowing how many people would be occupying our two rooms in the morning.

The clothes I hung behind the door were borrowed by anyone who needed them. My suitcase was "communized" for a trip to Petrograd. But all of their possessions were also at my disposal. These things were the trappings of life; what one wore, or ate, or where one slept did not matter. What mattered was the job of building a new world out of ruins.

This had been their life for five long years, with hardly a moment for rest. War to the north and war to the south, war to the west and famine to the east; civil war in the streets of Moscow. These were the folks who had the day-by-day job of keeping the country going. Their lives had become one long round of emergencies.

I will admit that I found them too strenuous. I loved them, but I began to hunt for a room where I could sleep. "You can buy one from a speculator," said my friends. "There are many places advertised in the papers."

That was the orthodox way of getting a room, for people who had money. Private business men with capital secured ruined buildings on contract from the city, holding them a term of years in re-

turn for putting in capital repairs. They did not rent these apartments, for they wanted quick turnover on their money; they sold the right to move in. After that you paid merely the usual rents of Moscow.

Many European cities have systems like this since the war as a means of keeping "rents" low for the ordinary population which cannot pay, while charging high prices to the newcomers who have money. I found that a room in Moscow would cost me three or four hundred dollars, unfurnished. I could stay there for several years with only a nominal rent.

But I did not want to stay for several years and the price was too high for a short stay. "How are the workers of this city living?" I wondered. "They cannot be paying such prices." So I went to visit a workers' commune and found the first "home" where I really wanted to live in Moscow.

Besides the houses which are managed by house committees and which are occupied by all varieties of people, making their own semi-legal arrangements with each other; and besides the houses which are leased on contract by speculators, and sold at high prices; and besides the houses which belong to government institutions, and are reserved for their employés;—there are also workers' communes. These are the favoured places.

The workers of a single factory or a single department may secure a house just as the speculators do, on contract from the city. But the city favours them by giving them the houses that need the fewest repairs. They also have their house

committees, who look after current expenses and divide these among the inhabitants. But the problem is simpler, since the income and social interests of all the occupants is similar. They do not attempt to make profit; they merely apportion the monthly cost of running.

The Amo Commune, which I visited, was a large house of 300 rooms, once an old ladies' home, then an army headquarters. Now it belongs for ten years to the workers of the Amo Automobile Factory, who repaired it.

It took one hundred men five months to do the job, working after hours, and all day Sundays. The woodwork had been hacked up for firewood and the heating and plumbing arrangements were badly smashed. They got materials from the government before the new economic policy came in, for the Amo is a government factory. They got some furniture from the Communist International in return for letting them use the house for foreign delegates for a time. Now it all belongs to workers of the Amo.

I went through room after room, spacious, well-lit, well-ventilated. These auto-workers had better quarters than any downtown hotel at that period in Moscow, though now the hotels have improved. I saw the three-room Russian bath in the basement, a real luxury, like a Turkish bath, only wetter. I also saw many American bathtubs, and sighed with envy, for I had been unable to get a bath in a tub for two months.

There was a large kitchen and dining room where

seventy-five of the single men chose to hire a cook and have meals in common. There was also a much larger kitchen, with oil-burning ovens kept at steady heat, in which families cooked their meals, taking them back to their rooms for eating. It was planned like a great food factory. I longed to keep house in the Amo.

There were clubrooms, with a stage on which their dramatic club gave plays, or to which they invited artists from the Grand Theatre, hired for the night. They had dances every Saturday. They had a schoolroom for the younger children, with two teachers furnished by the city; the older children went out to more specialised schools.

The manager of the Amo, a Communist, lived also in this commune, getting wages hardly more than his men. On the ground floor were forty children from the Volga, supported by the Amo workers out of their own rations, playing in the garden and going to school with the Amo's children. It was a many-sided life, co-operatively managed. I wanted a room there, but I could not get one, because I was not working in the Amo plant.

"What rent do you pay?" I asked a young machinist as I glanced around his spacious room, about sixteen by twenty feet in size.

"Last month," he said, "it was about three and a half dollars, but that was unusually high, for we bought fuel oil for two months ahead, which is one of our biggest items. Every month the house committee pays the bills, light, water, fuel, repairs; insurance, and tells us what we owe."

"How about ordinary rent?" I asked.

"We have the house for ten years, because we repaired it."

"But don't you pay any taxes? How does the city run if you don't pay taxes?"

"We pay for light and water," he explained. "When we ride on street cars we pay for those. What else does the city need money for? A few central expenses. It has other property that pays for those."

"Streets and sewers and sidewalks," I suggested, trying to think of the things that cities have to pay for. "Oh, well," he laughed, "when we need a sidewalk we'll have to pay for it and divide that also among the workers. But we haven't bought any sidewalks this year."

And so it was that I came to visit Sovietnikof, the man who runs the Department of Community Housekeeping of Moscow, to get the explanation of all these various ways of keeping house. Under him come the cars and the streets and the bridges, the lights and water and the repairing of homes.

"All these things pay for themselves," he told me. "They have to. They even make a surplus which is used for more improvements. Moscow is badly run down by the years of war and must be rebuilt. Our department has to do it. We have no money so we have to pay as we go. And we have not been doing so badly."

They are not. They are doing very well indeed. I noticed myself how well the cars run. Streets and houses were being repaired all over the city. The open squares were full of flower beds and children playing. I wanted to know how it was done.

"Our car-line," he said, "is our biggest income and also our biggest expense. Last month we took in $675,000 and spent $650,000 on the cars alone. We have grown since January when we only had 290 cars, which broke down often under the strain of carrying six million passengers that month; now in July we have 457 cars, in much better repair, carrying easily fourteen million passengers in a month. We have repaired and reopened 13,289 metres of old car-line and built three miles of new extension. We have repaired sixty-four crossings and 100,000 square yards of roadbed. We have repaired the communal houses where our car workers live and have re-equipped the Sokolniki car barns for making capital repairs." This was in the autumn of 1922.

All this was done on a car fare which ranged from three to five cents, according to the variations in exchange. Double fare was charged at night after ten o'clock for "luxury traffic." On the other hand, factory workers got special tickets with their wages at one-third the ordinary fare. The Moscow cars are nearly always crowded because the whole city is crowded. The Petrograd car line has a harder task to pay its way, for it covers more territory with fewer people.

Before the war the street cars of Moscow were owned by a Belgian company. This was one of the

pieces of property which Belgium wanted restored at The Hague. But the City of Moscow, which feels that it practically rebuilt the line out of ruins, has no intention of returning anything.

Sovietnikof told me of other city improvements. Thirty thousand miles of sewers and 1,800 wells cleaned, for the improvement of city sanitation. The city filter re-established. Capital repairs made in the gas works, where the war had wrecked alike factory, office and living quarters. Another large central building, which had been blown up by anarchists during the civil war, was being rebuilt.

They had appropriated $400,000 to relieve unemployment which resulted when the famine drove thousands of unskilled peasants to Moscow. These men were given work cleaning or repairing the central part of the city and carting away the broken buildings. The unemployed, incidentally, get all municipal services free, including light, rent and transportation.

For the repairing of workers' communes they had appropriated $800,000. "Moscow is still seriously overcrowded," said Sovietnikof, "and our housing situation is very bad. Our whole policy is to place as little burden as possible upon the toilers. We charge, for instance, only half as much for light and water as these things cost us, and make up the deficit in other ways."

"How?" I asked. "That's what I want to know? How do you get your money?"

"From rents of shops and market-booths," he answered. "That is our biggest revenue, if you

leave out the car-line, which pays its own way. Our biggest expense is for city sanitation and county roads."

"I see," I remarked, and then paused. For I did see, very suddenly. There had been a revolution in Moscow; I had almost forgotten it in this discussion of income and expense. The city buildings belonged to the city. In spite of ruin and war, no wonder they could make money on their rents alone. But it made me gasp to think how much rent a city would make which could take over its buildings while they were still undestroyed and fit for use.

"How about house rents?" I inquired, beginning to see a chance of unlimited income.

"Not yet," he answered. "We don't get much from house rents. The workers are poor and the houses badly broken. All we ask of our house rents is that they shall repair the houses."

Moscow suffered not only war and privation, and the blowing up of buildings by heavy artillery. Worst of all, she had two fuel famines in the dead of a Russian winter, when the bridges leading into the city were blown up or broken. Even food trains arrived with such difficulty that every day big signs in front of the Moscow Soviet announced the position of the food trains, so that the people might know whether they would have food next week or not. As for fuel—that was quite impossible.

The people of Moscow crowded in as few rooms as possible, tearing up doors and window frames and floors of other rooms for fuel. Water pipes broke all over the city, spoiling plastering and the remain-

ing woodwork. Army detachments were quartered here and there; for three years typhus raged in the city.

In the Metropole, where I lived, they were making new kitchen shelves from the first wood available for such purposes for eight years. All Moscow needed such repairing. And from June of last year till winter-time so much repairing took place that the city was unrecognisable. The general plan for repairing the city came under Sovietnikof's department. He told me about it.

"The Moscow Soviet owns 24,300 houses. (A house in Moscow is a large apartment building, sometimes a combination of several buildings around one central court.) Five thousand of these, which were too small to bother with, having less than six apartments in them, were turned back to the dwellers to use as they saw fit.

"Large houses are rented to government institutions or workers' communes. They pay for these by putting in repairs and hold them for a term of years. We especially favour the workers' communes, wishing to establish good living conditions for them. We have put 1,100 of the best-conditioned houses of the city at the disposal of such communes. Sometimes the city even advances the money for repairs on long-term loan, without interest, and in the profound hope that it will never have to be repaid.

"Houses that are much ruined and for the repairing of which we have no capital, we allow capitalists to repair, giving them the use over a term of years. We do not give them as good terms as we give to

the government or the workers, but they can make very good profits. They must give the city ten per cent. of the floor space as a sort of permanent rent, to use for city workers; the rest they can rent for any amounts they choose.

"We have let thirty-six such contracts, covering nearly two hundred houses, with forty to two hundred apartments in each." This was in August; a few months later the demand for buildings had so increased that the city was charging cash down for buildings. Several foreign firms had come in and were making money, but most of the capitalists were Russians.

"Between these two extremes of workers' communes and capitalist houses, come the mixed houses, inhabited by the many kinds of folks who happen to be living there. These are an administrative problem which we leave to the house committees, merely prescribing certain general laws for the protection of workers. Thus a worker cannot be put out of his room, even for non-payment of rent. His wages can be attached, but if he is unemployed his rent is free. He cannot be charged more than a certain low sum, fixed in proportion to his wages."

"These mixed houses present many problems which are handled in various ways. For instance, there may be a wealthy business man, a minor Soviet employé, a teacher and a bootblack, among the hundred dwellers in a given house. They cannot all afford the same improvements and repairs. So perhaps they arrange matters by letting the business man have a five-room apartment, in return for re-

pairing the central heating for the whole establishment."

The house committees apportion the rent among the different dwellers, often charging a "speculator" four or five times as much as a manual worker for the same kind of room. There is real conflict going on between the various elements—the class war carried right into the home. For space is so desperately scarce still in Moscow that it is a problem who shall have it, the man with the largest family, or the man with the largest bank account.

The housing regulations favour the workers. Quite fancy prices are charged for "extra rooms" which give to any family more than one room per person. This is the weapon used to secure fairly equal crowding, for the city is still in such straits that whole families occupy single rooms. In order still further to strengthen the position of the workers, the city government tries quite frankly to have them control the management of the house committees.

In the last three months of 1922, to meet the housing shortage, the Department of Community Housekeeping announced a requisition of one-tenth of all floor space. The house committees were given the task of deciding which rooms should be placed at the disposal of the city, and compressing the inhabitants into the remaining rooms. There were secured in this way 12,657 rooms which were at once redistributed.

In the 10,151 rooms of which report was made by the end of the year, 23,668 people were accommo-

dated, more than two in a room. Over half of the rooms went to workers, the rest to university students, Soviet employés and municipal employés.

The policies and plans of the Department of Community Housekeeping are constantly developing, not only in Moscow, but all over the land. Early in 1923 two conferences were held in Moscow, consisting of delegates from all Russia. One was a conference of water and sewer departments, and one of street car systems. They discussed various technical matters, and questions of administration.

Should each municipal utility be self-supporting and keep all its own funds, or should they all be pooled in a common city treasury? The street cars insisted on complete independence; the water departments were not so sure; they preferred to run on a budget, and get what they needed from the city treasury, turning over all surplus funds for general use.

Should workers be given preferential rates for water and light, as Moscow had done during December? The water departments declared against this, saying that it was too difficult technically, and would bankrupt them financially. But the street cars declared that the system whereby factories bought large blocks of tickets in advance at one-third rates, was not only good for the city but for the finances of the car system as well, since it gave them a certain basic traffic to reckon on, and encouraged riding.

Quite possibly both were right, for the nature of the two utilities differ. What works for street-

cars may not necessarily work for water and light. But the discussion shows how, under the new economic policy, Russian cities are working out their standards, with free discussion by the technical men concerned, unhampered by any past. In the end the City Soviet decides, or, beyond the city, the All Russian Congress of Soviets, if the question is one of national policy.

They may decide to run street cars on one plan, and water departments on another. They may decide to have these all in one department, or separately. They may even give leases to private capitalists or to organisations of workers. They can try first one way and then another, and do anything that proves most efficient, and most useful to the city. They discuss these things from both financial and social points of view, and sometimes they say frankly that the financial point of view must prevail this year, till the city is in better condition, but that as soon as they can afford it, they will lower costs and change methods.

Whatever plans they adopt, and whether the changes be great or little, the cities of Russia own all their city facilities, including their buildings, and can do with them what the people choose, to improve the whole life of the city. I asked Sovietnikof: "What will you do when the city is repaired, and all these buildings that have been given out to private people or workers' communes come back to you in ten or fifteen years, in first-class shape? Will you rent them then for large sums?"

"I do not know what the policy will be then," he

answered. "It will depend on many things. We might charge good rents, and see that the workers get enough wages to pay them. But this would not be done unless our industries are by that time in condition to do it. We might, on the other hand, give rents practically free, as a convenience for our citizens. But this would be inadvisable as long as the world at large remains capitalist, for too many people would make profit out of our free rooms.

"It will all depend on the state of our general advance towards socialism. We can do," he said confidently, "whatever we may choose at the time."

VIII

THE WAR WITH ALCOHOL

HAS Russia gone back to vodka? The rumours fly this way and that way. You hear them in the cafés of Moscow; on January first, they say, the state monopoly opens and vodka becomes legal. There is a secret mobilisation of empty bottles and corks, so that the State can get them cheap and undersell all competitors!

Rumours and whispers like this leak out to the world. Sometimes in very official guise, such as a decree about the state wine trust or a license to make cherry liquor. And questions are constantly arriving in Moscow, from temperance organisations all over the world, who want to know the facts.

"Has Russia gone back to vodka?" I asked Semashko, the people's commissar of health. He is the "Pussyfoot Johnson" of Russia, the man who runs the anti-alcohol propaganda. He does it as an official of the government which has pronounced against drink.

"Certainly not," he told me. "We shall never go back to vodka. What is more, we shall go forward, as soon as we are financially able, and forbid even the wines that are now allowed."

"Has Russia gone back to vodka?" I asked a

jovial American, who had been doing the cafés of Moscow in late December.

"Gone back," he laughed. "You can buy it in every café."

"But is it legal?" I persisted.

"Not so you could notice it," he said. "A billion roubles was the fine he paid—the restaurant owner where I got mine last week. They raided his place; I go somewhere else now.

"You've got to hand it to these Moscow police," he went on. "They do a neat little job. We were sitting in a little private room and we told the waiter to bring it along and make it plenty 'krupki' (strong). He made it krupki all right, so that we had to sip it. And there we were with the stuff on the table when bang goes the door, and in comes a hand and grabs our glasses and pours the stuff into a big bottle.

"I didn't have a chance to hide my glass and I thought I had experience in that game. They could even give pointers to the New York police. They had the evidence all right."

"What did they do to you?" I asked.

"To us? Nothing. Just took our names from our passports and jotted them down. It was the restaurant man that got it. He had to pay a billion roubles.

"They are edging up on it all right. It has to be done on the blind, as we used to in Kansas years ago. The waiters now protect themselves by bringing it hidden in a napkin and stand holding the door while you drink it. You have to gulp it down right

away; it's not as much fun as it used to be. But you can get it, you can get it anywhere."

There you have the different sides of the question, which are, after all, not contradictory. For Russia is in a state of struggle with the drink question, a struggle which sprang almost full grown into existence in the last two months of 1922.

Before the war, in the Russia of the czar, vodka was a state monopoly and brought in a large part of the state budget. The peasants bought it in the little State shops, and then, going outside, struck the tops off the bottle and drank it. You could see them in lines, all drinking at once; the temperance posters were full of such pictures.

But when the war came, with its vast increase in expenses, met chiefly by loans from the Entente, the proportion borne by vodka was not so important, while the demoralising effect of the drink became still more noticeable. As a war measure the czar abolished vodka, but allowed the finer grades of alcohol which were consumed by the richer sections of society.

Everyone knows how the Revolution smashed the wine cellars of the czar, and poured the wine into the gutters. It is not so well known, perhaps, that this act was not a mere protest against wine, but an act of desperate self-defence, in order to preserve discipline in Petrograd.

"We should have preferred to save the wine and sell it abroad," said Trotsky to me, "for it was valuable stuff. But it was a definite policy of the counter-revolution to try to create disorder and

anarchy and wreck the discipline which we were seeking to establish. That kind of thing is dangerous in a revolution. It starts with the dregs of the population, but it draws in next the less stable of the workers, until a whole population is corrupted.

"The men who wanted that wine were so mad for it that even machine guns would not keep them back. So the comrade in charge turned the machine guns on the bottles and destroyed them. The wine rose to the tops of his hip-boots so that he was wading in it. He used to be a drinker himself before he became a Communist, and it hurt him to see that good wine destroyed. But it was necessary to preserve order in Petrograd."

Red soldiers have described to me how, in marching through the Ukraine, they unearthed and destroyed hundreds of private stills manufacturing illicit booze. But these also were not measures against alcohol as such; they were measures for preserving order in war-time.

With peace came relaxation of tension. Vodka and all strong liquors over twenty per cent. alcohol content were still prohibited, and the scarcity of grain through famine acted also as an automatic prohibition. But wines were allowed; they were manufactured by a state trust from the grapes of the Crimea and the Caucasus.

Then suddenly in autumn of 1922, a fair harvest, with the increase of grain in the villages and of money in the cities, let loose an epidemic of boot-

legging. This is the form of the struggle in Russia at present.

I talked with Semashko about it. No one could have looked less like a violent propagandist on any subject. A little short medical man, with a stubby beard, he received me in a large, well-lighted office in the Health Commissariat, in that central section of Moscow which is reserved for government buildings. He never raised his voice, he put no passion and hardly any emphasis into his remarks.

I have heard men say of him: "There'll never be booze in Russia as long as there is Semashko. But it was clear that to him alcohol was not a question of exclusive interest. It was one of the problems of public health. It was bad for people; it must be got rid of. Just as simple as that.

"In our campaign against drink," he said, "health is our only aim. Alcohol is bad in any form. In some forms it is worse than others. We can't do everything at once, so we start with the worse forms.

"If we have a typhus epidemic, and insufficient doctors, we don't bother to invent new quarantines for measles. So we are not bothering with wine and beer yet, because our worst enemy is samagonka, this vile illicit drink that is being made so widely now in Russia. It is against samagonka that our main attack is at present.

"Wine is not a worker's or peasant's drink; it is too expensive. It makes a show in the cafés of Moscow and it brings in money to the government. But only the profiteers and the rich can buy it. It is not undermining the health of the masses of the

people. So it is not so dangerous as samagonka."

That is the cheerfully cold-blooded attitude in Russia. They want to safeguard the health of the workers and the peasants. If the profiteer ruins his health, they are not so much concerned. "But wine also must be stopped eventually," said Semashko. "As soon as we can afford the means for handling it. One thing at a time."

The fight just now is with samagonka. You hear little in Russia of general questions of total abstinence, or liquor as a moral problem. But all the papers are full, even on the front pages with "The War on Samagonka." The police have special weeks of raids and clean-ups. Letters with specific accusations are printed. And the courts are full of cases.

In the month of December there were 2,412 raids in Moscow, of which 1,175 were successful. In the first ten days of January, the police carried out a special ten-day campaign, concentrating on booze. They made 1,846 raids in those ten days, three-fourths as many as in the whole month of December; and found evidence in 782 cases.

Strong and picturesque and definite are the letters of complaint that come in from workers all over Russia to help on the fight. "Smolensk is an ocean of samagonka," writes one. "They are even using their co-operatives to buy extra-size kettles. The village named 'Good Inn' has apparatus to distill a ton at one time and is supplying booze over the border to the provinces of Gomel and Briansk. There are cases of police protecting it."

Another writes with stinging irony from Rostov in

the far southeast of Russia. "There is a chemical drug trust here with a factory named Veritas which manufactures a good and gladly drunk eau-de-cologne! But this method is not of great significance. Eau-de-cologne after all is a drink for intellectuals! We are chiefly interested in what is used to poison the peasant and worker. That is bootleg. It spreads solely through negligence.

"I myself can point out that in Rostov near the car barns there is a 'Black Sea' where the workers leave the greater part of their earnings. A similar institution is in the second house from the water supply station on Donskoi St. If these addresses are known to me, are they not known to the local police?"

That's the way they carry on fights in Russia, by giving names in the papers. These names frequently lead to arrests and prosecutions.

Trials of bootleggers are interesting affairs, especially now that the feeling of the public is aroused on the subject. Here is a typical case. Two women sit in the tribunal of judges who hear the evidence—that is something new since the revolution. The bootleggers plead guilty; they were caught with the goods. But they make the excuse of extreme poverty.

This is a recognised plea in the courts of Russia. If you can prove that you have committed a fault under pressure of dire need, you can hope for more mercy than if you have done it for profit. But the working-women in the audience show scant mercy to the bootleggers.

"Critical financial position," they jeer in the intermission. "You should see how he dresses his family on the money he gets out of my man. And how he used to get drunk and ride round in isvostchiks and shout."

"I hope those devils get it," says another woman. "The accursed ones."—And the bootleggers got it. A year in jail for the smaller fry and three years for one ring-leader who was up for the second time.

"The valuable thing," writes a correspondent to the *Pravda*, "is that the campaign is developing from the depths of the factories and mills. From here start the protests and the plans, from here it goes into the soviets and the press. The workers understand what drunkenness means at present and are raising the alarm. This is our greatest guarantee that the struggle will be successful—but this is not enough; we must have drastic action by the state apparatus."

The war with drink, like everything else in Russia at present, is not a thing by itself, but is tied up with the ideas of the Revolution. The bootlegger is denounced, not merely as a lawbreaker, but as a man who profits in the misery of others. The advocates of strong drink, when they venture to express themselves, are hotly denounced, not merely as mistaken, but as "counter-revolutionists, poisoners of Russia!"

In the summer, when bootlegging was first beginning to be noticeable, a professor named Oserof published a long article in favour of a return to the

state monopoly of vodka, or even to private trade in liquor under high taxation. He used the arguments familiar in all countries among advocates of drink, and a few drawn from the bankrupt condition of Russia.

"You have alcohol already illegally," he said. "Why not legalise it, control it and make money from it?" He pointed out that the government of the czar in 1912 made over $300,000,000 net profit from vodka, and that Russia is in dire need of money to stop the fall of her rouble, to start her ruined industries and even for the cause of education against alcohol. He spread alluring prospects of what could be done in the state budget with the money from vodka.

Promptly the official organ of the Communist party, *Pravda,* retorted in a hot article entitled "This Shall Not Pass." They called Oserof a counter-revolutionist. They called attention to the fact that he had opposed the "drunken budget" formerly under the czar; he was advocating it now, they said, in order to ruin the workers' and peasants' Russia.

"Now after our long strain of war and famine, when national health is at a low ebb, legalised alcohol would be infinitely more dangerous than it was before," they declared. "He proposes to get rid of the bankruptcy in our budget. But he would drive that bankruptcy into the bodies and minds and souls of our people. The party cannot overlook such suggestions even in the conversational stage. We understand what you have in view. We

have made many concessions because of our poverty, but such a concession as the surrender of our national soberness you will not get. *This shall not pass.*"

The position of the government is clear. But how is it to be enforced? That is more difficult. There are no special dry squads. In the pressure of many other emergencies, drink has not been isolated as a special problem. Until the past winter it has not seemed a great enough emergency to demand special attention.

The Health Commissariat is in charge of propaganda and organising public sentiment against strong drink. Its health centres, scattered all over Russia and only a few miles apart, are charged with notification of cases to the proper authorities. But the Health Commissariat has been fighting for four years the greatest epidemic known since the Middle Ages, the plagues of typhus and cholera, against which it had no medical supplies and insufficient doctors.

The army has its own organisation for fighting drink, under its "Political Department" which handles all questions of education and recreation and general cultural development of the soldiers. The general police are charged with enforcing the law among the civilian population, and the State Political Department in its investigations into smuggling and graft and spying, is also supposed to unearth illegal alcohol.

"I closed down the biggest café in Archangel," said one of the employés of this department, "not

for selling vodka, but for selling ordinary wine to such an extent that people were constantly coming away drunk. Yes, we have power to do that, even if the wine in itself is legal."

But the bootlegging wave this past winter made evident the need for more organised action. This is taking place now in a temporary way in the special raids by the police. One-fourth of all court cases in Moscow are bootlegging cases. More correlated action may be expected as general organisation improves in Russia.

"The enforcement of this question is too scattered," said Trotsky to me in a conversation late in December. "It is no longer sufficient merely to prohibit; we must organise both repressive and educational measures. We must get together the representatives of health and police and army, who are handling the question now, and form a joint programme." I learned later through other sources that he had called such a committee together.

"We must consider what we are able to enforce at present with our present means. In the scattered villages, where the peasants are making it at home, it is impossible to use repressive measures on every house. But this industry develops like other industries. Very soon some man, richer and shrewder than the others, begins to make it for sale. He becomes a petty exploiter of vice, a corrupter of his village. The children and the women hate him for taking their food by debauching their men folk.

"Men like this we can arrest and punish. They are more dangerous than ordinary home-brewing

peasants and fewer in number, with public sentiment already somewhat against them. They are, the weakest spot in the enemy's ranks and can be attacked with our present resources. As our strength in organisation grows, we can carry our repressions farther.

"But no repressions will solve the problem at the root. The basic cause is the emptiness of the peasant's life and this must be filled by higher standards of culture, by education and recreation and wholesome social life."

An echo of this sentiment I heard again and again. Every article in the papers that demanded "war on the bootleggers," demanded also the raising of the general cultural standard as the final weapon.

I talked with Antonov Avseyenko, under whom come the problems of drink in the army, where they are treated as part of the problem of education and health and general culture. He showed me all the correspondence and orders issued on the subject during recent months.

There seemed to be widespread interest in the question coming from all parts of Russia. Here were men in a distant regiment who wrote objecting to their commander because "he gets drunk." Here was a group of communists in a Petrograd regiment who voted to expel from the party any man found drunk.

Here were local men organising anti-drink sentiment by mock trials of bootleggers in which the evils of alcohol were discussed. "How drunkenness causes defeat," was the subject of "episodic conver-

sations" and story-telling in soldiers' entertainments. "I give a description of the camp of the 'whites' and how they got licked because they boozed," writes one correspondent.

The orders sent out from headquarters were that "commanders must take part in men's clubs and have evenings of entertainment, inviting in the families and making a home atmosphere." Large quantities of books and lectures and plays on the subject of alcohol were furnished; but even more emphasis seemed to be laid on "sports, wholesome games and general culture" as a means of combating the evil.

There was swift repression also. Some officers in a distant regiment gave a wine banquet to celebrate the anniversary of the revolution. They called in common soldiers to wait on table and clean up afterwards.

Word of it reached Trotsky. He promptly deposed the commander of the regiment and the commander-in-chief of the division and the two commissars, for allowing such conditions to exist in the army. He ordered them brought before court-martial. The announcement of this punishment and the reasons for it were printed in the papers and read in every regiment. Those reasons were not merely that officers got drunk, but that they did it in a way which injured the morale of the army and the relations between officers and soldiers. Drink is not treated as an individual fault in Russia, but as a social injury!

"The individual drunkard," says one of the many articles now flaming in the official press, "is

a sick man, even perhaps a lost man. We should treat him with pity, though our pity need not prevent repressive measures against him in so far as he is a menace. But it is the man who traffics in drink that must be attacked. For him there should be no mercy. If there isn't law enough, we can make some more. What are we Bolsheviks for? We have not yet lacked strength to punish criminals."

That's the state of the war with alcohol in Russia. It is a war with bootlegging, widely demanded and supported by public opinion, leading to a large number of raids and fines and closing of restaurants and imprisonment of owners. But it will be a long fight, for Russia has many problems and small resources, and concentrates on special problems only as they become unusually acute.

Drink is attacked as a problem of public health and national morale, rather than a question of individual morals. Repressive measures are occasionally quite severe and public demand is growing to make them even more stringent. But there is also universal agreement, in every article one reads and every official one talks to, that the final solution can come only by substituting an interesting cultural life for the lower pleasures of drink.

As for state manufacture of vodka, about which rumours from time to time arise, the words of Lenin himself laid down the government's attitude. When the new economic policy was under discussion and the question was raised in the conference of the Communist party how far they were prepared to go in

making concessions to the peasants, Lenin outlined the policy as follows:

"Whatever the peasant wants in the way of material things we will give him, as long as they do not imperil the health or morals of the nation. If he asks for paint and powder and patent leather shoes, our state industries will labour to produce these things to satisfy his demand, because this is an advance in his standard of living and 'civilisation,' though falsely conceived by him.

"But if he asks for ikons or booze—these things we will not make for him. For that is definitely retreat; that is definitely degeneration that leads him backward. Concessions of this sort we will not make; we shall rather sacrifice any temporary advantage that might be gained from such concessions."

IX

DO THE JEWS RULE RUSSIA?

RUSSIA, less than ten years ago the notorious hell of oppression for Jews, is now for them the freest land in the world. From the terrors of pogroms, from the humiliation of restricted residence and denied education, confined to a Pale of Settlement away from the great capitals, they have gone straight to posts in government and high industry and to sharing on equal terms all opportunities of life. In Minsk they form sixty per cent. of the university students; in Odessa thirty per cent. In governing ranks they are sprinkled through every department.

They are even going into agriculture and forming thereby an almost new chapter in the world history of Jews. Before the war there were barely twelve thousand of them on the land in Russia. "My father," said Trotsky to me, "was one of those rare exceptions, a Jewish peasant. In only a few places in south Russia were Jews allowed to hold land."—But now, freed from all restrictions, and facing in the little towns the competition of co-operatives and government trade, sixty-four thousand have settled on the land in the past two years, in forty-four colonies and one hundred and ninety co-operative farms.

Into coal mines and steel mills where they never worked before they have been driven by economic

pressure, and drawn by new opportunity. All down the Donetz basin of iron and coal you find them: over one hundred in the great electric works near Kharkov; one hundred and twenty in the pipe factory at Mariupol; scores dotted through Jusufka, the centre of steel. In none of these places did they hold a single job before.

The main shift of Jewish population has been the rush to the capitals, once prohibited places of residence except to merchant princes and men of high education. Moscow before the war had perhaps five thousand Jews; now she has between two and three hundred thousand. Kharkov, a much smaller city, has perhaps the same number. In the disorganisation of life after the civil war, they could not make a living in the little towns; they came to the capitals and found chances to get rich quickly, such as were seldom offered to any race before.

A world of trade from which their competitors had vanished,—that was what the Jewish petty trader found in Moscow. Foreign business men and Russian managers had fled before the Revolution. There was left an unskilled population amid the chaos following war. Private trade was suddenly made legal. But there was no big capital anywhere, either in the state or private business; for the first year of the new economic policy, it was the paradise of petty traders.

Who was so fitted to succeed in such a world as the Jews? Developed by years of petty trading in the crowded little towns of the Pale of Settlement. With wide family connections, insuring always some

contact with government on the one hand and with the chances of money-making on the other. With relatives in America sending food packages through the American Relief, and relatives in Germany offering goods for sale. In that first year of newly organising business, when mutual suspicion and lack of acquaintance made all trading operations difficult, who could operate as quickly as they?

The new-rich profiteers in the capitals, their families flooding the summer resorts, and ninety per cent of the speculators seen exchanging dollars and pounds and roubles on the Black Bourse,—are Jews. If any new wave of anti-Semitism arises in Russia, it will be because of this group, small in proportion to the whole Jewish race in Russia, but unduly prominent and aggressive. Yet these Jewish profiteers have no power. Socially they are despised, not as Jews, but as "nep-men" (profit-makers) by the ruling Communist group. They are taxed mercilessly by state and city. They pay many times the rent of a worker. They rent automobiles for Sunday joyrides at seventy dollars the day; rarely can they own automobiles, since import of pleasure cars is through the government and is severely restricted.

When men outside Russia claim, as they often do, that "the Jews rule Russia,"—it is not of the Jewish profiteer they are speaking, but of Jews in the ranks of government. I have followed their trail into many regions and departments. They are scattered everywhere, but they have exclusive control of nothing. They are combined with Russians; they work with Russians. Nowhere is there in Russia such

definite rule of Jews in any department of state business or government, as exists in America, for example, in the theatrical trust, the clothing industry and the department stores. Everywhere they intermingle with Russians; they even intermingle often in marriage, which was never legal before the Revolution.

That is the really astounding fact about the Jews in Russia,—far more astounding than actual rule would be. Only eight years removed from the Pale of Settlement, only three years from pogrom terrors, they are showing signs of more complete amalgamation with the population, especially in the ranks of governing Communists, than anywhere else in the world. This is the cementing done by the Revolution and the present passionate desire for rebuilding. Whoever can help is gladly taken; it is not even asked if he is Jew or non-Jew.

So little is the question raised that I found it hard to discover, in my search for Jews in high posts of government, which persons were of this race and which were not. I asked Trotsky about Jews in the higher branches of the state. "There are two of us in the Council of People's Commissars," he said with a smile. "Dovgalevsky, the commissar of Posts and Telegraphs, and myself."—Later, in discussing finance, he corrected himself: "I forgot; there is also Sokolnikoff, Minister of Finance. You see, I never counted them up as Jews before."

An acquaintance of Dovgalevsky told me later that he was not a Jew, and when I replied that Trotsky said he was, he answered: "Possibly then . . . I didn't know it." There was this difficulty

throughout in tracing Jews in government. In the Communist ranks, they are not thought of separately.

I went through one commissariat after another with Trotsky and checked up the leading men. Agriculture,—he remembered four members of the presidium,—all Russians. Health,—there was Semashko, a Russian, assisted by Soloviof, a Russian. Education,—four Russians and one Jew formed the presidium. The department of National Industries had a collegium of nine; one of them was a Jew.

In Finance they become suddenly prominent. Sokolnikoff, Commissar of Finance, and several bank presidents and members of banking staffs. Yet here also many higher posts were held by Russians working together with the Jews. Food, Justice, Social Welfare,—these departments are headed by non-Jews. The State Planning Board is run by Krjijanovsky, a Pole, and the State Railways by Djerjinsky, also a Pole. Thus are all races mixed in the government of Russia.

Suddenly come two departments in which many Jews are prominent, not at the head, but in responsible posts. Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. Chicherin, Commissar of Foreign Trade, is indeed Russian; but Litvinoff, chief of western affairs, and Weinstein, head of the Petrograd office, and Rothstein, chief of press bureau, and a host of others are of Jewish origin. In Foreign Trade Krassin, the chief, is Russian, but his first assistant and his private secretary and large numbers of his office staff are Jews. I asked one of the office force how many

Jews there were in Foreign Trade. "Quite a number," he answered, "but not as many as there used to be on the office force of the Communist International, where I worked before. All concerns that deal with foreign nations employ many Jews, since they speak many languages."

Here was the obvious reason for the predominance of Jews in the government departments that come in contact with foreigners. They are good linguists and have lived much in foreign countries. Their presence in those departments which first meet the visitor gives an impression of a great predominance of Jews in government, which is not borne out by the other, and larger, departments dealing with internal affairs. . . . There were, incidentally, large numbers of Jews in the office staffs under the American Relief Administration, and for the same reason of linguistic ability.

There is one section of Russia where the Jews are indeed ruling, and that is in the old Pale of Settlement which was so long their only place of residence. All through White Russia and the western edge of the Ukraine down to Odessa. In White Russia, among 6,614 civil servants employed in all departments of government, 2,030, or nearly one-third, are Jews. In the last two sessions of the Central Executive Committee of White Russia (the highest governing body), they formed thirty-four to thirty-eight per cent. of the entire assembly.

Here then is Jewish rule, in the very districts where so long they were herded together for more easy oppression. But there is a very simple reason

for this predominance in government. More than half the population of the towns in White Russia is Jewish. In Minsk, the capital, they form between fifty and sixty per cent. of the population; in the smaller towns, the proportion is even larger. The peasants, it is true, are White Russian. But illiterate peasants do not furnish civil servants.

The most noticeable, and at the same time most astounding, feature of Jewish life in Russia is that they are in all ways equal to the rest of the population. "There is less social discrimination than anywhere in the world," said several members of a Jewish relief organisation to me. They may enter all jobs as freely as any other people, and no more freely. Therefore in places where they form a large element of the population, they also form a large element of the government. In departments where their knowledge of language and contact with foreign nations is useful, they form large proportions of the office staff. To many other high posts they rise, as individuals, because of individual, not racial qualities. There is no rule of the Jews, but there is equality and freedom.

To this equality and freedom the Jews have come through a purgatory of torment. No people in all war-suffering Europe, from Belgium to Turkey, endured such continuous hell. Thousands were hanged as spies along the frontier when the World War started. They were naturally suspects,—an alien people speaking a strange tongue in the war zone. They were driven by whole towns from the war districts. In 1915 came the Great Retreat of the

czar's armies across Poland and White Russia, driving millions of the population before them and burning the towns behind them, to leave a desert for the advancing Germans. This great retreat was across the Jewish Pale of Settlement; the peasants who travelled that "Way of the Cross," dying in thousands by the roadside, were White Russians; the townsmen were Jews.

In this great retreat of the World War they were swept along by a common misery. They exhausted the water-springs with their thirst and poisoned them with their numbers. They died of cholera and typhoid and unrecorded diseases. They were carried far into the Volga grain lands, hitherto forbidden to them; and after five troubled years they were swept forth again by famine.

Even worse horrors were reserved for the Jews of the Ukraine and South Russia. There were years of civil war; and civil war always meant pogroms. For the czar's policy regarding the Jews had been this. They were allowed to live chiefly in the towns of a certain large area where the surrounding country was inhabited by alien races of peasants, Ukrainians, White Russians, who also must be kept in subjection. The Jewish town population traded with the peasants, profited from them and depended on them. The inevitable economic conflict of town and country, under the oppression which made the poverty of both, was sharpened by racial lines and religious prejudice, and by political pogroms ordered by the government. The same division of Jewish towns and non-Jewish peasants may be seen to-day

in Poland; it does not lead to mutual kindness. Thus imperial Russia kept alive antagonisms among her subject peoples, lest they should unite to gain their freedom.

After the fall of the czar, civil war swept back and forth through the Ukraine for three years. Bands of bandits and more organised bands of troops plundered the country; one and all killed Jews. Petlura, Wrangel, Makhno, Denikin, the Poles followed each other. The Red Army did not commit massacres of Jews, but this in itself was a new danger; for after a retreat of the Red Army the pogroms redoubled, on the ground of "criminal association with the Bolsheviks."

An orphan child I know lost his father in this manner. The man was reading in his home when the Poles summoned him. Smilingly he reassured his wife: "This is a regular army, not a bandit band," he said. "See, I leave my book open to read on my return." He was shot against a wall with his brother and son who chanced to accompany him; his wife went crazy.

There were thirty-three thousand murders more or less like this one, of unarmed citizens, without pretence of open warfare. There were whole towns mercilessly destroyed without a trace. There were five thousand women who admit to being violated; how many fail to admit it will never be known. Only fourteen towns in the whole Ukraine escaped pogroms; eight hundred and nineteen separate places suffered, some of them many times.

The life in a typical Ukrainian town during this

period was described to me by one of its Jewish citizens. "Ekaterinoslav," he said, "was one continuous pogrom. First Petlura held it and then Makhno; each side killed Jews, claiming that they helped the other side. Under German occupation it was quiet; but then Petlura came again and after him the Bolsheviks. Then came the Volunteer Army and began plundering. When we complained to the authorities they mocked us, saying: 'Have you not yet been wiped out for your criminal association with Bolsheviks? Think yourself lucky.'

"Then Makhno came again and did not massacre us, but only burned two blocks of our store buildings. When the Volunteers returned, they could not forgive us for not having been slain by Makhno; it showed, they said, our criminal sympathies. They announced a real butchery this time, but we succeeded in buying them off with all that we had.—After that came the Soviet Government, which did not humiliate the Jews as Jews, but took away the property of all the bourgeoisie. The Jewish bourgeoisie was ruined, but the rest of the population readjusted itself. Then came famine, epidemics, cannibalism. . . ."

That is the grim tale of the road by which the Jews of Russia passed on their road to freedom. Like a great broom the pogroms scattered them over Russia. Some of them returned with the coming of peace and order; thousands never returned.

Three Jewish agricultural colonies near the little town of Farstow are building themselves again after being completely wiped out by Denikin. The Joint

Distribution Committee lends them seed. They creep by heavy wagons home from the towns to which they fled; they sleep under the wagons in the fields, and plant the grain which will yet build for them new homes.

In one Ukrainian town is a building where three hundred and forty Jews were enclosed and murdered by local peasants stirred to frenzy by a teacher, who was later executed by the Soviets for his deed. The house stood gaunt and dreadful for several years, till the local population asked the state government for permission to destroy it, "since it pains our consciences and keeps alive the ghosts of the murdered."

"What you have done, you have done," came the answer. "You may not destroy the building. Make of it rather an orphans' home for the children of those you murdered." . . . To this both Jews and Gentiles protested that it would be sin to raise children in such a house of hate, with such memories of death. So it became an adult trade-school, attended largely by the Jewish population.

Thus, all over the Ukraine, the simple folk are living down old hatreds even in a few years. An orphan asylum of Jewish children, whose fathers were slain in pogroms (there are a hundred thousand such orphans) was recently adopted formally by the local Red Army company of Ukrainian peasants. At the celebration of adoption, the soldiers stood in ranks before the home, taking solemn oath to defend with their lives these children and protect them from all harm. Yet it was their fathers,

stirred up by invading armies, who slew the fathers of those children.

Many of the scattered Jews never returned to the towns from which they were driven. They mixed with the wider life of Russia and are rising in that life to power. Here is Rafael, an ignorant shoemaker who developed qualities as an administrator. He was made head of a school district in Moscow and succeeded so well that he is now school director for the whole Moscow province and has notably reduced illiteracy.

Here is Golzman, former carpenter, now head of the Electrical Industry of Russia. He was the man who worked out the first plan for the tariff, highly important during the reorganisation of industry on a money basis. . . . Here is Bogorachoff, once tailor in New York, now general manager of the Clothing Syndicate of Russia. He discussed with me the mixing of Jews and Russians in the industry with which he was familiar.

"I am a Jew," he said, "but the rest of my board are Russians. Of the four Trusts comprising our Syndicate, the Moscow and Petrograd Trusts have each one Jew on their boards and the rest Russians; the Kazan and Nijni Trusts are all Russians. Three of my factory managers in Moscow are Jews, and fifteen are Russians. However," he smiled, "most of the assistant managers are Jews."

That's amalgamation, not control. In the New Russia Jews and Russians are mixing. In this is great promise of strength for the future. For if one can speak at all of difference in race charac-

teristics, the Jews and Russians are well adapted to supplement each other. The Jews furnish an energetic, organising strain which will go far to make good the loss of thousands of foreign managers who organised Russia before the Revolution.

Take the way they combine in a trade union. I visited a labour headquarters. The president was Russian, large, simple, honest, solid. A typical peasant type, obviously a manual labourer for years; you could not ask a more reliable fellow for guiding a meeting. . . . Near him sat a little Jewish girl, cross-eyed, intense, nervous. She was the spark that made the machine go. The big fellow took too long to get into action. But if you asked the little girl a question, rat-tat-tat,—out came the answers like a machine-gun. She alone would tear an organisation to pieces with her nervous intensity; she lacked the poise of the Russian. But also,—he lacked her speed.

In this speed is an element of aggression which can arouse prejudice. Down in the hall of the unions in Moscow I found an inscription scrawled on the wall by an irritated workingman: "Why is it that all our leaders are Russians, while the fellows who boss us are Jews?" it said with keen discrimination. Racial feeling is not dead yet, even in Russia.

But it is more nearly dead, I think, than anywhere else in the world. In these same unions, the presidium of the All Russian Trade Unions is composed entirely of Russians; but the Cultodel, which prepares the trade union literature, is largely Jewish. A man who prepares correspondence courses for the

unions tells me that it is a Russian who discusses policy with him, and a staff of Jews who prepare the courses.

Thus are they mixed everywhere. The common job of making a new land draws them together. New and sharper conflicts cut across old racial and religious lines. In the Communist Party, of course, the mixture is most complete, and the sense of race difference least. Here the fiercer flames of revolution have burned racial distinctions to ashes. In the fight for their common goal there is neither Jew nor non-Jew.

By actual statistics, gathered over a year ago after the party "cleaning," the Jewish members formed seven per cent. of the party. In the country as a whole Jews are less than three per cent. of the population, hence they may be said to have twice their share of party memberships, which is not surprising in view of the vast number of peasants who are non-communists, and among whom the Jewish element is also small. . . . It is interesting to note, incidentally, that Jewish men form less than five per cent. of the men in the Party, while Jewish women are nearly twenty per cent. of the total number of communist women. Are they politically more awake than their Russian sisters? Or are they wives and sisters of pogrom victims? Or is this poetic justice for their special humiliation under the czar, when Jewish girls were forced to take the yellow ticket of the prostitute in order to live and study in university towns?

Suddenly, as you list the committees of the Com-

munist Party, you discover one high centre of Jewish rule. The Political Bureau, highest centre of all for planning and policy,—on it Trotsky, Kameneff, Zinoviev and Radek, all Jews, are balanced against Lenin, Stalin, Bucharin and Ryckoff, who are non-Jews. Here is a half-and-half control; here is a citadel on which the charge can really be based that the Jews rule Russia. But how far are Communists of this type any longer a peculiar race or nation?

No Red Army soldier thinks of Trotsky as a Jew; they adore him as revolutionary leader. Few of the workers of Moscow think of Kameneff as Jewish; his characteristics as communist administrator have long since overborne any race characteristics. This governing group makes laws which punish Zionism as counter-revolution, and debars its books, because of its emphasis on race and religious distinctions. At the same time they allow, for the first time in history, law courts conducted in Yiddish to serve the needs of the uneducated Jewish population in cities like Vitebsk. Just as they also allow law courts in other languages for the needs of other non-Russian-speaking populations.

These Communist Jews discuss race characteristics with philosophic detachment; one even finds among them, occasionally, a curious anti-Semitism. "I am against the Jewish race," said one young Communist Jew to me, discussing the profiteers, "because it is a danger to socialism. It is too much devoted to individual accumulation and personal comfort. It does not, in general, do basic labour, but exploits the labour of others. For the future prog-

ress of humanity, it is more harmful than useful, and must be absorbed in other races." . . . Such criticism, voiced by a Jewish Communist, to whom Communism was far more than any question of race, is but an extreme example of a widespread detachment of spirit. In the governing ranks of Russia, Jews are free to rise to any position. Already, therefore, they begin to lose the partisan sense of race.

New conflicts appear in Russia, neither racial nor national but economic, developing their own lines of cleavage. There is no such bitterness in Russia between Jew and non-Jew, as there is between fathers and sons within the Jewish race itself. Young Jewish factory workers demand and secure old synagogues for social clubs and university dormitories; between them and their fathers is a harsher division than any racial line which still exists.

Young Communists of Jewish race hold anti-religious processions through the streets of the orthodox on holy festival days, and are sometimes beaten up by their outraged elders. Such a parade in the tobacco centre of Kremenshug provoked a riot, and order was restored by Ukrainian police. No such bitter conflicts take place now in Russia between races and nations, as occur between young and old,—the past and the new.

Race prejudice, of course, is not entirely conquered. It exists noticeably among old members of the educated classes, who see the new profiteers pass them in standards of comfort. It exists also among the religious peasants, and somewhat, though less, among the workingmen, who carelessly begin to iden-

tify Jews and profiteers. In the governing Communist ranks, it is non-existent. In general, in Russia, the Revolution with its new tasks and new freedoms have killed race distinctions more completely than anywhere else in the world.

Whether prejudice will again revive depends largely on the Jews themselves. Already those who become aggressive speculators arouse animosity; those who sink themselves in the task of reconstructing Russia are taken as comrades, since they act as comrades. Only if the Jews as a race should become identified with one group or the other,—and this is unlikely,—will the conflict again assume racial lines.

X

THE CHURCH REVOLUTION

A REVOLUTION is tearing the Russian Church asunder. This most ancient, most conservative form of Christianity is shaking with the same throes which six years ago shook the most ancient feudal form of government in Europe. The struggle is just beginning.

I have seen gaunt old priests, with long white beards, grasp the front of their black robes and tear them open at the chest in revolt against ritualism, crying: "What are these? Nothing! Nothing! It is the heart beneath that counts."

I have seen flashing young priests, with dishevelled auburn beards and eager eyes, declaring: "The hour of our liberation has struck. The same class struggle goes on now in the church that went on in the State. We, the priests, will win the same independence from our hierarchy that the people of Russia won from the czar."

The conflict between church and state precipitated the church revolution. When the Soviet Government reached out to take church treasures for the famine,—that started the explosion. But that was not the only cause of the explosion. Deep down, in the great mass of the Russian priesthood, discontents had slumbered for years.

The Russian church is facing at one big crisis three problems which occupied three centuries in the church of western Europe. The Reformation, the doctrine of Evolution, the social emphasis of Christianity;—all these questions, which in the west developed through many generations, are faced today by the Russian church at once.

Peasants still pray to saints' relics to protect them from evil. Communist young people tell them that there is no God, since evolution disproves Him. That is the crude condition in which the fight begins.

I remarked to a Communist friend, an English girl living now in Russia, that it seemed to me a pity to attack religion. "You don't understand what religion is in the villages," she answered. "When I first came to Karelia, I washed some clothes in a bucket I found in the house of a peasant; and by so doing I brought eternal ill luck on that family. Nothing that she can do will ever make her house the same again. . . . That is her religion; it is charms and evil, and magic. It must be blotted out of the hearts of the people."

Between these two extremes stand the great bulk of Russian people. They are loyal to their Revolution; and also to their Church. They are bewildered in these new ideas that are crowding upon them. It was in an effort to save both loyalties that the New Church Movement began.

There was also a class revolt within the church. For a hundred years the Russian Church has known two types of priesthood: the white clergy, who married and lived among the people, but could never

rise to high positions; the black clergy, or monks, from whom bishops and all high dignitaries of the church were chosen. The white clergy were ignorant and suppressed; close to the peasants, but spied upon by the upper hierarchy. There was a gulf between these two groups, but the lower group was powerless.

Then came the Revolution; and the gulf was widened. The upper hierarchy of the church became the stronghold of counter-revolution. Tikhon, the Patriarch, openly denounced the soviet power as Anti-Christ, by implication encouraging the peasants to rebel against it. Armed nobles implicated in revolt, found refuge in monasteries, and Tikhon was charged with conferring priesthood upon such men in order to protect them. When the armies of the counter-revolution advanced, led by Denikin, Kolchak and Wrangel, priests went to greet them and bless their armies. After several years of soviet rule, a group of Russian Bishops, meeting in exile, proclaimed a Romanoff as the lawful czar of Russia.

Early in its existence the Soviet Government passed a decree separating church and state completely. As a result of this decree, church marriage was no longer legal; the civil ceremony alone was valid. The village schools, till then largely under church domination, were declared state schools, and it was forbidden to teach religion in them. Almost incidentally, as part of this law and a means to its enforcement, it was forbidden to teach religion to any organised groups of young people under

eighteen. As a matter of fact, Protestant Sunday schools flourish both in Petrograd and Moscow, with the knowledge of the authorities. I asked Krassikof, the official of the Department of Justice for dealing with church law, why these Sunday schools were allowed.

"The exact form of the law is being somewhat reconsidered," he told me. "It was passed at a moment when the church was openly fighting the Soviet Government; its purpose was to take the children out of the priest's control and do away with this old form of education which was mainly learning the cathechism. As we at present interpret the law, Sunday schools are not really schools, but a form of children's worship, with a little instruction in morals added. There is no law against anyone indulging in any form of worship that suits him."

The Soviet Government, as a government, takes no interest in religion, as religion. Any man is free to follow the dictates of his conscience. Many sects, in fact, are freer now than in the days of the czar, when differences from the Orthodox Church might be punished as heresy. I visited a nunnery on the banks of the Volga, where a group of women kept bees and an orchard. The Mother Superior still remembered the years she had spent in prison for deviation from orthodoxy. Now, under the Bolsheviks, she was allowed to worship as she chose. But her fate was not greatly improved, for already the local Board of Education was stretching out its hands to take the nunnery, to use for a children's home.

For the new laws on property affected the church as well as all property owners. The land and buildings now belonged, legally, to the government, to be used in whatever way seemed to it most needed. They could not dispossess the nuns without giving them lodging elsewhere; but the School Board claimed that buildings capable of housing five hundred orphans were being wasted when used by a small group of fifty nuns. They wished to transfer these nuns to another half-empty nunnery, quite oblivious of the fact that the two different sects might hate each other. With the government officials, it was a cold-blooded question of housing facilities; to the nuns, no doubt, it seemed religious persecution.

From time to time news goes out to the world of the seizing of church buildings by the government. I questioned Krassikof, and I myself visited many of these church buildings. The general law regarding church buildings in Russia provides that, like all buildings, they are the property of the municipality. The former worshippers, to the number of twenty persons, make out a request to the municipality for the use of the building; it is granted to them without rent, a concession to the church which is not made to any other organisation in Russia. But they are bound by their contract to use the building for religion only. If they use it to conceal property of exiled nobles, or to agitate against the government, they lose their right to it. Several churches have been closed because illicit stills for the manufacture of liquor were found on their premises. One such

church in Moscow had afterwards been secured from the city by a Young People's Communist Club, whose atheist mottoes affronted the sacred pictures.

Down in the Caucasus I had heard rumours of wholesale closing of churches. I found that these were churches listed in Baedeker as "garrison churches," maintained by the czar's government for the use of the army. The new government, in which church and state are separated, is not maintaining churches for its soldiers. In law, it regards church buildings as property of the state (as indeed they were also in the days of the state church), to be used by any group of the community that can best utilise them. In practise, however, church buildings have been less diverted from their former owners than any other class of large buildings in Russia.

The first, and perhaps the only, open clash between church and state, took place over the question of church property. The state won, and the church was split in two. For the state chose, very shrewdly, to open the fight on a moral issue, in which already a large section of church sentiment was on the side of the state.

Five months before the government reached out to seize church treasures for the famine, there were priests and congregations who urged the giving of this gold and jewels. "It is impossible to beautify buildings with opulence when under their walls people die of famine,—our brothers according to Christ," said one prominent priest openly.

The taking of church treasures for the purposes of the state was no new thing in Russian history.

For centuries the gold and jewelled crowns and robes and pictures were used by the czars as their reserve treasury for national emergencies. In 1727 church treasures were used to build a canal; in later years for ships and ammunition and horses. In the recent World War, Archbishop Nicodeme advocated taking the treasures of the Uriev monastery for the needs of Nicholas Romanoff. Even after the World War, the Greek Church, which is affiliated with the Russian, saw its treasures taken by the Greek government for an imperialist war against the Turks.

Archbishop Nicodeme advocated the seizing of treasures with the words: "The history of the church teaches us in difficult years to sacrifice all our property.—It is our duty to give up these treasures which have for us but a temporal significance." . . . Now the same argument was made, with much greater reason, for the needs of the greatest famine of history, to save the lives of millions of Russian Christians.

At last, on February 23, 1922, the All Russian Central Executive Committee issued a decree that the local city governments should appoint committees to collect from the churches all treasures not needed for worship. Tikhon, the Patriarch, opposed. He called upon the priests to protect their treasures. A few responded and stirred up active resistance. Then soldiers came and took the treasures amid showers of stones. Priests who stirred up such opposition were tried; many of them were condemned to death, but not many of the sentences were executed. The morale of the opposition was

so low that instead of open refusal and martyrdom, many priests chose the easier way of stealing the treasures and trying to ship them out of the country.

The government played no favourites. Not only priests were condemned for "stealing" treasures destined for the famine. Nineteen men in the jewel vaults of the Treasury Department were also found guilty of stealing treasures and were shot. Esthonian couriers, bearing off treasures in diplomatic cars, were seized and imprisoned. The government was grimly determined.

Except where resistance was made, the gathering proceeded in due order, usually under the supervision of the local priest, who watched the committee pry off jewels and remove gold ornaments, and weigh and list and pack the objects. Lists were published frequently in the papers, as a guard against graft. The treasures listed in Isvestia, up to June 16, 1922, covering fifty states and separate governments, gave 744 pound weight of gold, 628,635 pound weight of silver, 35,000 diamonds and emeralds, 120 pounds of pearls, 43,711 gold pieces, and 773 trinkets of diamonds and pearls weighing 980 pounds.

At once, with the publication of this list, appeared the announcement of train-loads of grain from Finland, arriving at Perm and Orenburg, bought with the first sale of church treasures. There was no further protest about sacrilege. The great Russian Church, which had been relied on by the counter-revolution as the main organised opposition to the Soviet Power in Russia, split in twain, helpless, at the first encounter.

For the church itself was not unified. "It is our shame that we should have waited for compulsion," said priests openly from their pulpits. "In a country suffering untold horrors, famine, cannibalism, corpse-eating, the Christian community should have been the first to give all that it had." . . .

No great mass movement arose at Tikhon's call to oppose the government. Instead, three priests from the lower orders went to Tikhon and told him to lay down his power. "The church can no longer function with you at its head," they said bluntly. "We must have peace with the state, and you are an irritation." In the end they wrung from him a paper whereby he retired until the next church congress, which should judge between them. These priests created a Council of Ten, and prepared to capture the church machinery before the congress should occur. To this end they called first a nationwide conference of progressive clergy, to reconstruct the church in modern form. It was known as the New Church or the Living Church.

Long before the New Church Congress met, the issue of church treasures passed into oblivion. A month before it had been a real issue, but a month is ancient history in Russia. New and graver issues took its place.

It was a gathering such as could only be found in Russia. Sweeping robes of black and grey and brown; sweeping beards of white, short beards of grey, rebellious beards of auburn; silver chains around their necks on which hung holy pictures. Out of the Middle Ages they came, bowing and chant-

ing. Yet this was the group that was planning church revolution.

On the first night I saw them perform the service of blessing the conference at the great Church of the Saviour. Hundreds of candles cast dim lights across vast distances. Gold-robed dignitaries made strange motions full of ancient religious meaning. The voices of choiring priests, flooding the high vaulted darkness, were more penetratingly sweet than any music I had ever listened to.

The next day I saw these same priests gathered in the Third House of the Soviets, formerly a priests' seminary, now the property of the government, used for conventions. Karl Marx, Lenin and Trotsky looked down from the walls. In front of the meeting was a crude altar, made of an arm chair covered with a white sheet, and surmounted by a picture of Christ. A chalice, a crucifix and a candle placed on the sheet,—by these was the room of Karl Marx made into a religious place. In front of the altar, grouped around a table covered with a red cloth, sat the priests who had called the conference.

From Archangel on the north to the Crimea on the south, from Petrograd to the far reaches of Siberia, the priests in the hall had come. What did they want? A dozen things at once, in one confused jumble. Some wanted to abolish ritual, others to abolish monks, others talked of primitive Christianity and priests who worked on the soil, others about abolishing paid masses for the sick, others about allowing priests and monks to marry on the same terms as other citizens, others about peace with

the government, others about the class struggle in the church. Some declared that Christianity and Communism were one, and that it was the fault of the church that the Communists had turned atheist. Others said: "The government is infidel, but it grants freedom of conscience. At least let us live in peace with it as loyal citizens."

The climax of the revolt from the standpoint of church custom, was the making of married bishops. Sixty-one bishops were deposed by the conference; and among the priests appointed in their places, there were five of the lower "white clergy" who had wives still living. These five men said solemnly that they must "take counsel." Not only with their God, but with their families at home, whom they were thrusting into the vanguard of the attack which society reserves for innovators in marriage.

From the standpoint of the outside world, the chief innovation was that the New Church swung solidly behind the government as loyal citizens. It deposed bishops who were disloyal, on the ground that they were constantly bringing the church into trouble. It approved the taking of treasures for the famine. It talked even of excommunicating Patriarch Tikhon for the harm he had done the church in bringing it into conflict with the state. Threats of hell and excommunication were the weapons used on both sides for more than a year. It was no gentle church quarrel; it was revolution.

The new group itself was, however, far from united. Antonin, one of the early leaders, stays in my mind as a tragic human figure. The man who

started a revolt and could not stay with it. He was a monk himself, a man of the dominant order. Years ago he championed liberalism in the church; he introduced changes in the ritual, speaking in Russian instead of old Church Slav, so that the people might understand the service. For these innovations he was exiled to a monastery, from which after ten years, the revolution set him free.

He was an old man in body, but a fighter in soul. His hot words, from his pulpit in Moscow, almost caused riots against him. He denounced Tikhon unsparingly. "If the Patriarchate has suffered and suppressed itself," he cried, "it is because it was in overt opposition to the government. The government knows that the church abroad lives and breathes monarchism. Everything that was dissatisfied in Russia grouped around Tikhon. He ruined himself because he fell under the influence of the black hundreds."

When eleven priests were condemned for resisting the government in the matter of church treasures, Antonin urged the church to sue for pardon. The government postponed sentence, awaiting this sign of loyalty. But the upper hierarchy of the church refused to petition a "godless government." Antonin appealed alone, and saved the lives of six.

"Those forty bearded priests who turned their backs," he cried next Sunday in church, "they were the murderers. And you, my audience, who howled down my appeals for pardon,—you murdered those men. You showed yourselves as impenitent active enemies of the government. If you had shown self-

control and sense, those priests would not be today in hell."

That was the fighting quality of Antonin. His life was threatened; he received also letters of high praise, calling him the chosen one of Christ. "It is not far when in the Church of the Saviour in gold letters on marble shall be written your noble name as a fighter for the faith." Few men have the glory of calling forth such adoration. Yet in a few weeks it was over. The conference that he called and at which he triumphed, left him a broken, disillusioned man.

I visited him in his cell in the heart of Moscow. I saw him coming across the cobbles, leaning on the arm of a woman. People drew near to kiss his hand and he made on them the sign of the cross. He had been made that day Metropolitan of Moscow; the common folk looked on him as a great spiritual leader, who would make it possible for them to be loyal citizens and also loyal churchmen, to serve God without giving up their Revolution.

He lived humbly; up a narrow iron stairway from the monastery garden, through a smoke-blackened kitchen we went into his narrow vaulted cell. He hung his coat on a nail behind the door, and called for tea, drinking it without sugar or milk from a blue enamel mug, tearing off a piece of dry bread from loaves given by the faithful. He told me the story of the new church movement, of which he was still acknowledged leader. He ended in bitterness and pessimism. "We are deposing sixty bishops; this is not peace, it is conflict. I fear great-

splits in the church. . . . There is even feeling against me, because I am a monk. It is a rebellion of white priests; there is no holding them."

He was leader of a great revolt, and already it refused to be led by him. He went from his cell that day to the last session of the conference, and voted against one innovation after another. He opposed married bishops; the traditions of monkdom still held him. But the young priests from the provinces, whom he himself had summoned, swept on beyond him. They made him Metropolitan of Moscow; but on every concrete issue they voted him down.

There was no hesitation or bitterness or pessimism among these young priests, fresh from the provinces and the common people. They talked of a dozen great changes to be made at once. The country monasteries were to become toiling brotherhoods; the city monasteries hostels for the poor. Saints' relics, "the holy bones," were to be given to museums. The church was to be modernised at once. Priests were to work with their hands and become citizens of the soviet republic. They would even, eventually, abolish ikons and have nothing but primitive Christianity.

"We of this congress are the eagles," said a young priest from the Ukraine. "We go forth to bring freedom to our brothers." His eyes flashed with joy as he said it. He felt himself one of the chosen in a great movement. He was not shaken by any fear of splits; he was not entangled in any loyalty to the past. Nor was he aware at all of the tragedy

of that bowed figure, sitting a few feet away, the Metropolitan of Moscow, still the head of the conference. For he was young, not old; he was one of a thousand comrades, not a lonely questioning soul. He was on the crest of the Revolution, sweeping forward with power. . . .

Such were the faiths and hopes with which the New Church started on its year of agitation among the people. Their plan was widespread discussion, ending at last in a great Church Congress, democratically chosen from priests and people, representing the highest church authority and capable of passing legally the reforms they desired. They did not intend to call this Congress until they believed they could control it.

Nearly a year followed before the Church Congress was called. It was a year of bitter strife in the church. A dozen new groups emerged, advocating different reforms; Antonin seceded and formed a less radical movement. In the signing of the service in Strasny Monastery he caused a sensation, by refusing to kiss Krasnitzky, leader of the extreme group. To the words "Christ between us," he did not reply, as is custom, "He is and shall be," but answered: "There is no Christ between you and me." He explained next Sunday to a meeting of his adherents: "I can still co-operate with him in an administration, but I have no spiritual contact with him."

Out into every province went the waves of the congress, and telegrams came back announcing that this or that side had been "liquidated." I found

church rows going on in the far north, in remote villages. In Saratov half the churches were "new church" and half were "old church." The dead Tolstoi took an interesting part in these squabbles. He had been excommunicated long ago by the Orthodox Church; he was restored to honour by the New Church, and excommunicated again by Antonin's group, because he had disbelieved in the virgin birth and the resurrection of the body.

At last came the Great Church Congress, in the summer of 1923. I was present. What local pressures had been used to secure delegates I do not know; but I can testify that it was composed of bona-fide priests and laymen from all parts of Russia. It was split in many sections, but it maintained an organisational unity, and elected a Highest Church Council representing various factions. It approved the appointing of married bishops. It ordered that relics should be taken from their wrappings and exposed to the people that they might know what these relics really were; but it refused to go to the length of donating the relics to museums. Education of the superstitious peasant must be gradual.

The only group not represented in the congress was the Tikhon faction; for Tikhon was on trial for high treason, and no one ventured to sustain him. The Congress abolished the office of Patriarch, declaring for a democratic form of church government. They declared Tikhon unfrocked and deposed. They were far more bitter against Tikhon

than the soviet prosecutors were; these latter took the trial as a mere routine.

Then suddenly Tikhon himself made peace with the government. He issued an open confession in which he declared that, brought up all his life as a monarchist, he had sincerely opposed the Soviet Government over a space of years, and acted against it. History had decided against him; he accepted the separation of church and state, renouncing all further opposition.

Tikhon was set free; he began preaching and drawing large crowds. He refused to recognise the actions of the Church Congress; he was seen at once to be a power. Both sides appealed to the law against each other; but the law was cheerfully indifferent. Tikhon was now a loyal citizen; the government's quarrel against him was ended as long as he remained so. What happened in church organisation and theology was not the affair of the state.

The war between church and state, as such, is over. The ground is thereby cleared for the war of ideas. The Russian Church, that most ancient form of organised Christianity, is suddenly face to face with modern life. Will it be reborn, or will it perish?

In this war of ideas, the Communist Party is definitely anti-religious. As a government, it makes no distinction between loyal citizens on any ground of faith or unfaith. A man may belong to any church or none, and still hold office in the government, exercising all the rights of a citizen. But he cannot join the Communist Party if he gives open allegiance

to the church. Men have even been expelled from the party "for religious observances," by which has been meant that they had a church marriage. For party membership is based on acceptance of certain views, among which a materialistic conception of human history is one.

The distinction between party action and government action is a fine distinction, not always observed. The law of the state, for instance, forbids the schools to preach either religion or irreligion, but zealous Communist officials down in the provinces make their own interpretation of this law. One director of education in a province of Russia told me with joy how he had compelled his teachers, in the week before Easter, to give a series of lectures on the crimes of the church against science. Strictly speaking, this is not an attack on religion; but given in the week before Easter, there was no doubt of its intent. When I repeated this incident to a higher official in Moscow, he deplored it but said that time would correct such undue zeal.

The Young People's Communist League is the chief organ of attack against religion. Some of its methods are extremely crude. On Christmas, in 1922-23, I saw an anti-religious procession in the streets of Moscow, held by the Young Communists. They carried puppets of all the gods of the past, from Osiris to the Virgin Mary; they marched to the Red Square and made a funeral pyre of the gods. On their banners were slogans such as have been known in western civilisation since the days of Ingersoll, declaring that man has made God in his

own image. They had pantomimes of corrupt priests, blessing with one hand and taking money with the other.

Twelve days later, on the anniversary of the Baptism, I saw hundreds of thousands of men and women packed inside the great Church of the Saviour in Moscow, reaching even to the river below, where the priests broke the ice and sprinkled the crowd with water, and men and women crossed themselves and made prayers. There was a much larger crowd here than at the procession of Young Communists. The government took no part on either occasion. It is rumoured, however, that some of the older Communists passed word to the younger enthusiasts that the methods of their procession were too crude to be effective. The procession was not repeated at Easter.

The atheism of the Young Communists is, however, no mere negative attack. It has in it an element of joy and triumph and freedom which indicates what an oppression of the human spirit the church has been in the past. I met a young Communist couple with two children. "The older child was baptised in church," they told me, "and named with a saint's name. But our young daughter is called Freedom. Because when she was born we were free and knew that there was no God."

A young mother of my acquaintance watched her baby die in a little hut in the country, from tuberculosis acquired under hard conditions of living. Month after month the child wasted away, and at last the day came when the father bought a plain-

pine box in the village and nailed it himself, and took it on a cart to burial. "It was a new graveyard," said the mother to me, smiling. "A beautiful new field with clean white daisies. I did not have to put my baby near the church" It was quite clear that the church was to her only oppression of spirit.

I visited an exhibition of posters from the Young People's Communist League. "Our most popular lectures," they told me, "are those on natural science, because of the campaign against religion." I examined the poster announcing these most popular lectures, to see what they meant by attack on religion.

"Man's Conquest of Nature" was the theme of the series. The first lecture was the Harnessing of Wind and Wave; it was illustrated by cartoons of wind-mills, and sailboats. The series of lectures went on, through electricity and radium; there was a whole lecture on Edison, the boy who rose to become a great conqueror of nature. There was a lecture on Human Speech and the Printing Press, discussed as forces which knit together a human society, and enable man to conquer the earth.

Suddenly it was quite clear what the Young Communists meant by atheism. One could not read even the titles of the lectures without a sense of joyous triumph. Man was no longer the tool of the high gods in heaven, placating them with ritual and prayers and submission; tossed at their will to success or destruction. Man, Organised Man, was destined conqueror of nature. Science and Co-operation are his tools.

This is the joyous, positive faith that goes forth to attack the ancient church of Russia from the Communist Youth pouring into the villages, scoffing at the holy bones of saints, declaring crudely that God was an invention of the rich to keep poor men from revolting. Under the momentum of their attack the older priesthood stands bewildered, ignorant of modern science, unarmed with any weapons of defence.

The New Church is an attempt to save religion in Russia, by adopting modern science and the social revolution, and reconciling these with Christianity. It has in itself unmistakable religious fervour, which accepts the new hopes of communism and calls them Christian. I remember, after many months, the prayer of Archbishop Yevdokim, calling a blessing on the Soviet Revolution, while the great throng of hearers murmured in answer: "Pravilna, pravilna,— it is true, it is true."

"Ages pass. All powerful Time puts its mark on everything. Everything moves forward. Human society changes, its thinking processes, habits and needs. Only the czar's autocratic Russia did not change. In it, as before, a small band violated the will of the people. The long suffering millions groaned in slavery. New and new thousands, despairing, went down prematurely to death.

"I am ashamed infinitely of the past. We, the priests, have enslaved millions, and kept them in darkness. Kept them in terrors, in a sea of needs and fears. I do not know another crime in history that can compare with this. . . .

"Great Russian people, my heart, my brain, my conscience commands me to bless the day of your emancipation. Blessed be the days of the October Revolution that broke the bonds of your slavery. Let the priests call everyone to labour. Tell them that by common toil we shall transform Russia into one of the most prosperous lands in the world. Joy shall fill the Russian land and the banner of Freedom shall wave over it forever."

Such is the moral fervour of the church reformers of Russia. They stand between the joyous, aggressive atheism of the Young Communists and the deep, mystic fatalism of the ancient Russian village, seeking to live in the world of to-day and yet to save religion. They are raising funds for educating the village priests in the doctrines of evolution and natural science. With the capitulation of Tikhon to the decree of separation of church and state, and his promise to refrain from attacks on the government, —the conflict passed out of the realm of politics into the realm of ideas. As such it will go on for at least a generation.

XI

EDUCATION IN SOVIET RUSSIA

SOME delegates of the Usbek "nation" came to Moscow. "We want a teachers' institute," they said. It is a prosaic demand, but it covers the wildest romance of education that perhaps the world has ever seen.

You have never heard of the Usbeks? Neither have I! Neither has anyone else except a few anthropologists who study the half-wild tribes between Europe and Asia. Some eight or ten of these people, doubtless sons of privileged chieftains, once penetrated far enough into the world to learn Russian and receive a higher education. It isn't surprising that you and I missed meeting those eight or ten.

In the days of the czar the Usbeks had not discovered the alphabet. It follows that they had no textbooks. No one, since the world began, even learned to read and write in Usbek. But then came the Russian Revolution.

Now there is an Usbek alphabet, reduced to simple Latin characters by learned philologists in Moscow in conference with those few Usbeks who knew Russian. There are textbooks in the Usbek language and schools in the Usbek villages. When the Usbeks send to Moscow for a teachers' institute, the

education authorities take it as a routine of business, instead of the gorgeous romance that it is.

For Russia is crammed with such romances. The Usbeks are only one of a dozen petty nations that received alphabet and schools since the revolution. There are the Seranie, a Finnish tribe in the far north near Archangel. There are the Kuktschi, a savage tribe in the Caucasus. And the Migrel and the Lazen and the Imeretiner,—and half a dozen more. I write these names with joy, for I want to be the first person to put them into English. Unless some anthropologist or British secret service man has beaten me, I think this is their first appearance.

In the Russia of the Revolution, there are schools carried on in sixty different languages, and text-books printed in all of them. Some ten or twelve of these languages had first to be reduced to writing. This programme of teaching the new citizens of the soviets is based on a definite programme of equal chance for all races. "Shall we multiply universities in Moscow before we give village schools to the Bashkirs?" is the way they put it.

Nor are these alphabets only for minor tribes which cannot count in Russia's history. When I was in Baku, the world's greatest oil-district, I visited dozens of schools and kindergartens. I talked with eager young men who were back from organising village schools among the Tartars. The Russian workers, they told me, had nearly all learned reading and writing. But matters went slower with the Tartars, who make up half the oil workers of Baku. Their language had no modern alphabet,

only an ancient literary Arabic with little relation to daily speech. Until after the Revolution, this vast population of Tartars was unlettered. Now they also have a new alphabet and are fast learning to read and write. This is a fact of importance in the oil history of the future, for the oil of Baku is not so far removed from Persian oil fields to the south, and the connection between the two is by means of these Mohammedan peoples.

One hundred and sixty million copies of textbooks were issued by the Government Publishing House in Moscow, in the five months from April to August, 1923, for the job of teaching Russia. This Government Publishing House is the largest publishing house in the world. It prints books of every kind, but by far its largest output is school textbooks.

They need this enormous number of books (more than one per person in Russia, more than fourteen for each of the twelve million children in the schools) —not only because old books are worn out, but because the whole system of education is new. Even textbooks on mathematics are rewritten, to conform to the new mode of teaching.

Is there a communist mathematics, I asked in amazement. They explained patiently. Their idea is modelled more on the Dewey ideas of education than on anything else we know in America. Every new book by Dewey is grabbed and translated into Russian for consultation. Then they make their own additions.

"We call it the Work School," said a teacher to

me. "We base all study on the child's play and his relation to productive work. We begin with the life around him. How do the people in the village get their living? What do they produce? What tools do they use to produce it? Do they eat it all or exchange some of it? For what do they exchange it? What are horses and their use to man? What are pigs and what makes them fat? What are families and how do they support each other, and what is a village that organises and cares for the families?"

"This is interesting nature study and sociology?" I replied, "but how do you teach mathematics?" He looked at me in surprise.

"By real problems about real situations," he answered. "Can we use a textbook in which a lord has ten thousand roubles and puts five thousand out at interest and the children are asked what his profit is? The old mathematics is full of problems the children never see now, of situations and money values which no longer exist, of transactions which we do not wish to encourage. Also it was always purely formal, divorced from existence.

"We have simple problems in addition, to find out how many cows there are in the village, by adding the number in each family. Simple problems of division of food, to know how much the village can export. Problems of proportion,—if our village has three hundred families and the next has one thousand, how many red soldiers must each give to the army, how many delegates is each entitled to in the township soviet? The older children work out the

food-tax for their families; that really begins to interest the parents in our schools.

"Physics and chemistry and all forms of science start very early and very simply. What is the earth into which seed is put? What different kinds of earth are there? What effect does water have and where does the rain come from? By the third year we try to make trips to factories and understand the beginning of collective industry.

"For our second main endeavour is to teach the child collective action. We are frankly trying to fit him to build a socialist state. The schools are our next battle-front for communism. We have our self-governed school community, in which teachers, children and janitors all have equal voice. It decides everything, what shall be done with the school funds, what shall be planted in the school garden, what shall be taught. If the children decide against some necessary subject, it is the teacher's job to show them through their play and life together that the subject is needed."

That's the programme,—a dream of advanced education such as the world has not yet seen. And the reality,—shows half-savage tribes which have never had an alphabet, and thousand-mile stretches of backward peasants who never learned reading and writing. It is a typically Russian combination: a gorgeous plan and an utterly backward people, and a handful of young enthusiasts who intend that the thing shall be done.

How are they managing it?

Last year in Russia proper, not counting the

Ukraine, 120,000 teachers out of a total of 150,000 took special courses to prepare themselves for this new form of school. They have to take these courses or lose their jobs to the new teachers who are being turned out of sixty new pedagogical institutes all over the land. For the older teachers, to save them, are three to six weeks' institutes with discussions, written tests and essays, held in three or four places in every province. Professors come from Moscow and Petrograd to hold them; all teachers must attend at least once a year.

They are a motley crew, these teachers. I talked with a group of them who were visiting Moscow on a five days' educational tour. This also was provided free of charge for half the teachers in the Moscow district; the other half would come the following year. Old gaunt men in threadbare clothes, old women wistfully eager to keep up, thin tall youths who had long outgrown their scanty clothing, energetic intelligent young women,—just the job lot of teachers as the Revolution found them, trying to make themselves over to fit the new world. They were going through big city institutes of learning, biological museums, physics laboratories. I asked them what chances they had to learn.

"This visit to the city," one girl told me, "and the Teachers' Institute for six weeks, and the Hecker American Correspondence Courses."

That is another romance,—those correspondence courses. A Methodist preacher from the East Side of New York was fired by the idea of educating Russia through correspondence courses on the

American plan. He hoped first to enter with the Y. M. C. A. and spent two years with them organising courses. But America failed to recognise Russia and the Y. M. C. A. could not enter, so Dr. Julius Hecker, in the year of the famine, came over to Moscow with $5,000 and got a contract to run correspondence schools. He counts his pupils now by the tens of thousands.

His is not a profit-making concession, though he received free from the government a large building and much assistance. Most of his work is done on contract for government or labour organisations. The Department of Education desires courses for teachers, or the Trade Unions wish courses for foremen. He works them out, sells them at a price fixed by the organisation in question, at or below cost to insure widest use; and receives subsidies from the organisations to cover his losses.

Help of all kinds to educational projects is offered by the government, which knows it has not means enough to do the great job quickly. A committee on which I worked received the offer of a large estate on the Volga, if we could raise $5,000 for agricultural machinery and equipment, and build thereon a self-supporting children's colony, learning modern agriculture. The local authorities even offered to support the children free till the first harvest produced by their labour put the institution on its feet. But poor though they may be in money and anxious for assistance, one thing the educational authorities insist on,—that neither religion nor capitalist ethics shall be taught in the schools.

"The teacher must know how to teach nature study without God, and tell fairy-tales without the benevolent rich lord," said a man in the Central Department of education to me. I laughed, for I had seen the scheme at work.

Down in the Ukraine a teacher was telling a fairy-story of Grimms;—yes, they still have fairy-tales, but strangely modified. It was the industrious goose-girl who marries a prince. Obviously in modern Russia a marriage with a prince does not include "they lived happily ever after." The teacher related the marriage as a fall from grace; the goose-girl was tempted and abandoned honest work, and was supported in a palace on money stolen from the common people, her early friends!

But the children refused such a shameful ending! They liked the goose-girl, so they had her refuse the prince and marry a coal miner who rose through ability and industry to be "red director" for the state mines of the district! The ending invented by the children is now adopted for the fairy-tale of Grimm.

Like everything in Russia, education went through its period of utter breakdown and confusion. In the days of the czar the village schools were church-controlled. In the cities were expensive gymnasiums and réal schools for the sons of the upper classes. In the last few years before the war the larger cities introduced some free city schools for sons of smaller officials who could not afford the gymnasium. But children of manual workers had little chance to learn.

During the Great War many larger city schools were taken over as hospitals and for other war uses. This use continued also during the civil war and the great epidemics. The new school authorities tried at once to get the buildings, but against the demands of war and disease there was little chance.

"We had some horrible experiences as a result of these war-uses," said a member of the school-management to me. "In Smolensk we took back a high school that had been a hospital for venereal diseases. We had no soap nor disinfectants; the blockade of the Entente kept these things out. We cleaned as well as we could with water. But soon they came to me: 'What shall we do; the children are coming down with syphilis'? So we had to close the building."

These frightful times are past; for two years there have been soap and disinfectants in Russia, and a most energetic Board of Health. But the famine also brought hardship to the schools. I visited a school building in the village of Novo Semekino, near Samara, in the early autumn of the famine. Tiny, primitive, with one room holding perhaps forty children, it had been built in the days of the czar. With the revolution came zeal for education, and the year before the famine it was working three shifts. One group of children came in the morning, another in the afternoon, and a group of adults in the evening.

All over Russia I met similar expansions of school buildings,—before the famine. But now the building in Novo Semekino was shut, for the school master had fled to get food. All through the

famine districts this happened. I went to seven villages organising kitchens; in three the schoolmaster had gone; in the four where the school teacher remained (they were usually self-sacrificing young women who stayed longer than the men), we saved them by making them managers of the A. R. A. food kitchens. But they no longer had time for teaching.

During that terrible winter I talked with Lunarcharsky. "Education has been strangled by the famine," he said. Half a million children in orphan homes came upon the budget of the school authorities. The State went on the new economic policy; in place of supplying everyone with food, including teachers, it was trying to make ends meet and acquire a gold basis. There was no money for education; the schools began closing.

Other difficulties also came, incident to imposing a new form of education on teachers who knew nothing about it and who were still vaguely antagonistic. "I must admit," said a Communist to me, "that the results were funny. Even our friends had to say: 'What kind of schools are these?' The teacher took the idea of work by the children, but nothing more. The schools were sometimes merely places where the children sawed the wood and washed the floors and got a little food."

But even in those darkest days one thing was noticeable about the children's homes, which from the beginning were the stronghold of the new education, supplied with the best teachers, since the children were continuously there. They might be hun-

gry; they might be without pencils or books, but they were self-reliant little communities. I have visited scores of them,—sometimes far from the railroad, when the matron was absent in the village and the two teachers had not yet returned from town where they went in quest of food. Four or five of the children conducted me through the building with courtesy and utter absence of self-consciousness, showing me kitchen and bedrooms and answering my questions about menu and order of the day as well as a teacher could have done.

This was part of the basic policy of the new schools after the revolution. Self-government, self-help, self-management in common activity began from the first, even when there was nothing but a meagre bread ration to manage.

I visited a home in Samara where waifs cast away in the streets had been gathered. First these children were assembled in large "collectors" to be disinfected and quarantined and then organised into regular children's homes. That was theory. In practice there was no soap for the collectors, and no change of lice-infested clothing; the famished children died in huge proportions. But a score of "regular" homes had really been organised in a few weeks. I visited one of them.

Only five weeks removed from the streets and the hell of the over-crowded collector; but already organisation of life was plain. The children had little to eat, but all were in classes studying. They greeted me sincerely as I entered, informally coming over to meet me.

"What do they study in the first class?" I asked. "Reading and writing?" . . . "No," smiled the teacher, "in the first class they learn to speak Russian. They come from a dozen different tribes, speaking different dialects; they must first learn to understand each other. In the second class we have story-telling from Russian history and literature and the children learn self-expression. In the third class they learn reading, each from a different book, since we have no textbooks. Only the highest group can yet learn writing; we have just six pencils in the school!"

Those were famine conditions. Yet the children in this school, just learning to speak to each other, had their School Council for self-government which received a gift of chocolate I sent them, duly electing a representative to come and get it and furnishing her with proper papers of authorisation. They divided the chocolate fairly; they also divided fairly the day by day labours of the school, the floor-washing, bed-making, kitchen assistance. This fair, friendly division of labour is considered the cornerstone of education as citizens of a future socialist commonwealth.

For two years, while the education budget was so scanty, volunteer organisations came to the assistance of the schools. The slowly opening factories ran schools for the young apprentices and adult courses for workers. The education fund, fixed by law and union agreement for every industry, was diverted by vote of the workers to subsidise ordinary children's schools. In Baku the entire school

system was supported out of the budget of the Oil Industry. They were proud of their achievement; in the czar's days there were twenty-two schools and no kindergartens; now there were sixty-two schools and fifteen kindergartens, and 121 classes in reading and writing for adults.

The direct management of schools by industries was only temporary. Workers' committees, unions, government departments, every form of organised life was called on for help in those days, lest education should go down. But with the first good harvest in Russia the days passed when Lunarcharsky must complain to the Congress of Soviets that his teachers were driven even to prostitution to get a living. Teaching is not yet a high paid profession, but it is above the reach of hunger. And through even this time of bitter need, fifteen to twenty thousand new schools have been opened in Russia, not counting the Ukraine.

Teachers are on the privileged list for the many educational chances which Russia now offers in profusion outside the regular form of the schools. I met in the great Agricultural Exposition in Moscow a teacher from Gomel who had come up to see new methods of farming. He was not a communist, but an "intellectual" who had fled to the villages to get food, during the hard winters of the revolution. His criticisms of the soviet government had been many, but they were drowned now by appreciation of the free excursion.

"Never since the world began," a teacher said

warmly, "has any government set out to give such chances for culture to its people."

He came to town with a trainload of six hundred others, mostly peasants but with a liberal sprinkling of village teachers. The railroads and street-cars gave free transportation. The Exposition Committee gave a dollar "spending money." And the workers' organisations of Moscow took the country people in as guests, giving them board and room and guides from their own scanty wages. He himself had stayed at the house of some Map Makers, and learned about the making of maps.

The pittance he received as village teacher supported him meagerly enough in the village, but would never have paid a trip to Moscow. Tens of thousands of peasants, village officials and teachers, received similar free trips last summer to the Exposition. In May of this year the Exposition opens again, as a permanent free school for peasants. This kind of popular education, through mixing of peoples, excursions, exhibitions and visits, is tremendously popular in Russia.

Since the first days of the Revolution, "propaganda trains" on the railroads, and "propaganda ships" on the Volga have carried to the people the messages of the new government. Many of the new schools had hardly anything to read at first except posters against Denikin and Wrangel. Mixed with these, and gradually superseding them, as political enemies faded into the past, were vivid posters showing illiteracy as the next great enemy of the nation; illustrations of tractor farming; information about

diseases of cattle. Ignorance, dirt and disease, and the old fashioned farming methods were not gently reproved as in American exhibitions, as injurious to health and efficiency; they were denounced in war terms as enemies of the nation, traitors which sabotage our advance, "the next war-front we must conquer."

The "Baby Weeks" which proved popular in America have leaped across the tamer people of Europe, finding their second home in Russia. During an entire week in Moscow I was attacked by young collectors of donations for child welfare; while cheery posters of marching babies demanded mothers' milk, fresh air and freedom from flies. In the art of graphic cartoon and picture the Russians have little to learn from any people. They think in cartoons and exhibitions much more than in chilly statistics. They work in drives of public enthusiasm much more readily than in the prosaic organisation of every day.

Thus, at the time when public education was strangled for lack of money, the army made itself into one great school for soldiers; the trade unions organised 2,300 teaching centers and threatened expulsion from the unions and threats of unemployment for those who neglected this chance to learn to read. The army, drawing peasants from illiterate villages, is now one hundred per cent. literate, which is more than can be said of the French army. The trade unionists are going from bench and machine through strenuous three-year courses in the Rabfacs,

which I shall tell about later, straight into the universities.

In summer the university students go in great bands from city to city, on educational tours which cost them nothing. The railways furnish free transportation; in the cities the students of Moscow exchange rooms and rations with Petrograd students who have gone to Moscow. Twenty youths of my acquaintance went on a two months' educational tour to the Altai mountains, between Russia and Central Asia. They were accompanied by four professors, a geographer, a geologist, an economist and an anthropologist; they were entertained by the local republic, and gave in return for their food and horses new maps of a region that had never before been explored.

In dozens of ways the lack of money is made good by the enthusiasm of the people. A trainload of students from Moscow was going to visit the coal region of the Donetz; on the way the engine broke down. The students promptly divided themselves into three groups and held three sets of continuous lecture courses for the local people, one for the children, one for the peasants, one for the railway workers, telling them all the new things they had been learning in their university. There is a tremendous will to acquire knowledge and to spread it, which breaks down all hindrances.

The great Agricultural Exposition last summer was a final climax of this popular education, through the mixing of peoples. From every part of Russia the peasants came, and each found his own village

typically represented. The high two-story house of the north, where the heat from the animals below rises to warm the family; the many types of log cabins of the middle timber regions; the southern houses of straw and mud plaster; the round tents of nomads made of felted camel-skin,—all these modes of living were faithfully reproduced, with their living inhabitants still installed in them.

In the festival pavilions gathered groups of many nations, in national costumes with national dances and songs. When they went forth over the Exposition Grounds they could see, in the midst of buildings of a score of soviet republics, a great relief map of Russia, fashioned in the earth itself, showing the treeless tundras of the north, the vast timber belt, the steppes of the south, the rivers and mountains to the farthest seas.

Not a single tribe, however ignorant, lowly and wild, was displayed contemptuously, as we in American Expositions show the Igorrotes. The spirit of the Exposition was: "Behold the kinds of folks we are in this great country." But over against all actual dwellings was set, in criticism of all alike, the display of the model village, with community building for school and library and hospitality and recreation. The new state industries were shown, their products, their hopes and achievements; the co-operatives were featured; new methods of agriculture, of soil drainage, of better seeding and cultivation, filled dozens of buildings.

What the Exposition does as one great event had been carried on continuously for over a year in

"Peasants Houses" in every city and township centre. The chief of them is in Moscow, a big hotel with beds for several hundred peasants, with baths and disinfection for clothes, and first aid, and reading-room and club rooms. It receives peasants coming to Moscow with complaints or demands from villages throughout Russia; it furnishes them with a Legal Aid Department which connects them with every part of the government; with a motion picture and lecture hall on agricultural methods, with a first-class exhibition of animal and plant diseases, modern methods of churning and baking, model specimens of farm products from different regions.

The communist government of Russia knows, and knows fanatically, that its entire future depends on the way the young peasants grow up and the ideas they acquire of co-operation with one another and with the city workers. Lenin himself started over a year ago, a movement now known as "Smichka," which means "friendly co-operation." Its purpose is to bring close relations between workers and peasants.

This was the idea back of the hospitality shown by Moscow workers to the exposition visitors, out of their own wages. The idea goes farther. Every large factory, every government department, chooses some village to which it acts as Big Brother. The Foreign Office of Moscow has under its wing a village some sixty miles from Moscow. The high diplomatic officials may be summoned any day to go down to the village and explain the relations between Russia and England. When the villagers

come up to town, they find information and help in the union headquarters of Foreign Office employees.

These Big Brother relations are as serious and permanent as a formal adoption; they are assumed by mutual agreement and involve definite responsibilities. They are a revelation of the possibilities of education and cultural help without money.

Not far from Moscow is a Musical Children's Home, where education specialises in music and dramatic art. A musician from the United States, sitting beside me at a concert by these children, said that no private school in America contained such a collection of voices. They were chosen for musical talent from tens of thousands of children in children's homes in Moscow. They have for their Big Brother patron the Grand Opera Artists who come down to entertain the children with concerts and instruction.

Students in Moscow who came from the province of Smolensk, chose a large township of Smolensk to which they act as big brothers. In their summer vacations they go in organised groups to teach the villages the latest knowledge of the city. When the peasants come up to Moscow, the students are hosts and guides.

The university students are a story by themselves. The whole university system has been changed by the Revolution. There are personal tragedies here; my secretary, a girl of good family, had been waiting for two years hoping to get into the university. Education in Russia is a class affair; trade union representatives, communist party members, children

of workers and peasants get preference. Private persons wishing education can also enter, but the number is limited and the cost high.

There is reason for this discrimination. The State pays the bills, and regards the universities as organs of the State, to train as rapidly as possible the leaders needed for a new Russia. Education is a State gift, not to be had for mere wishing, but given to those whom some recognised organisation wishes to have specially trained. The Foreign Office selects and sends some promising young man to learn Asiatic history; the Railways send picked young workers to learn engineering and transport problems. The universities are regarded as a tool for building and developing Russia.

They have more students than ever; Petrograd indeed has fallen from fourteen to six thousand; Moscow remains the same; the provincial universities, Kazan, Saratov, Yaroslavl, Perm and many others have tripled, more than making up for Petrograd. But they are filled, not with young people acquiring culture, but with students taking special courses for special needs of the State.

So the various faculties undergo great changes. Theological sections, once important, are now no more. In the Crimea, existing in loneliness on a small pension, is a learned man who spent sixty years specialising in Church Law. The rights of bishops, the rights of priests, all these he knew thoroughly. Now he is told by a ruthless government: "The work of your whole life,—is nothing." Many personal

tragedies are scattered through Russia of men proficient in things which no longer exist.

The Faculty of Law is smaller, and quite made over. Private property as its basis, has been superseded by community rights. Feudal powers and estate titles are thrown in the waste-basket. State officials no longer have to be lawyers. New laws need a few new lawyers, but not so many as before.

History and Economics,—here the change was greatest and wrought most upheaval. It was not all done by fiat from above; it was done also by conflict with student groups who had helped make the Revolution. Here is the hot field of conflict between old czarist dictatorship and new Marxist dictatorship. Before the revolution there were perhaps not three professors in Russia who ventured to advance an economic interpretation of history; now, if they would hold their jobs, they must learn as fast as may be, to be Marxians. The havoc has been great in these faculties.

Even Mathematics notices a change. The old scholastic discipline interests no one; applied mathematics for the engineering problems of Russia is the demand of these state-chosen students. Literature,—in the old days it required interminable browsing in church archives in the original Slavic tongue. "Now," says an energetic student, "Pushkin and Lermontov are good reading, but who wants to know the church fathers."

Education becomes practical and vivid, the handmaid of immediate work. It loses in academic flavour; it gains in application to modern problems.

The greatest increase in higher learning has come in technical institutions. Agriculture, mines, electricity,—these flourish, developing new branches. Into these pour not only young people of university age, but adult workers, skilled in trades, graduates of the Rabfacs.

The Workers, Faculties, or Rabfacs, form the one completely new organisation in Russian education. They are a temporary expedient; when all of Russia's youth is educated, they will not be needed. They are a short-cut for especially gifted workers to the chances of higher learning.

I talked with a mechanic in the Amo Auto Factory who had received the chance to enter a Rabfac. For years in America he had wanted higher education, but had never been able to secure it. Now his union was paying his way for three years' intensive study in preparatory technical courses; on graduation from the Rabfac, he could enter the highest engineering colleges.

Three-fourths of the students now entering the Medical School of Kharkov are Rabfac graduates. Soldiers who learned to dress wounds in the war, or were pressed into hospital service in typhus epidemics; they acquired a taste for being a doctor. They passed preliminary examination, proving that they could read and write and had general intelligence. They were recommended by their organisations as serious in purpose. Then they spent three grilling years in a Rabfac preparing for the university.

The old professors groan that these students

break down high academic standards. The new professors retort that they bring energy and purpose. Let no one suppose that the Rabfacs are amateur easy courses. "I never knew what work was in my life," said a university man to me, "till I saw these Rabfacs. They are awkward in mind; they lack habits of study; they go at it bitterly, relentlessly. Day by day they grow thin and worn, their features are pointed with hunger and work."

Such is the grim determination of the modern student world in Russia. I remember a young girl who slept occasional nights on my sofa. She had fought at the front in the Polish war and shown signs of leadership; it was decided that she was worth training for her country, so she came to the university.

She spent her evenings giving political and civil instruction to factory groups. She slept anywhere she could, having no room in the over-crowded city. She shivered one day in the snow, and when I loaned her a sweater, remarked that "since she was frozen at the front, she didn't seem able to stand cold." She laughed as she related how she and another student, in the hard years of civil war, had been refused admission to a café because they were barefoot. Such silly bourgeois standards,—these cafés!

I remember the morning when she woke in my room, converted to the doctrine of open windows. "It's the first morning I haven't a headache," she said cheerfully. I remember the afternoon when she said: "I feel so queer to-day. I have no stomach-ache. It must be the cornflakes and milk you gave

me instead of that heavy black bread." She had continuous headache and stomach-ache; she was worn out nervously by her years at the front. She studied till she broke and went to a farm to work, and came back to study to breaking point again.

Another girl I know, who went as nurse to the Volga famine at the age of sixteen. She had typhus and typhoid and smallpox all in succession, in a horrible overcrowded barracks lying two in a bed. She woke from delirium to feel her partner's dying struggles beside her. She rolled fainting out of bed while the woman died above her. She herself was so far gone that the doctor said: "Put her with the dead ones," by the merciless rule that reserved the scanty care for those who still had a chance. Yet she recovered; she has continuous stomach trouble from eating substitute straw bread after typhoid. But she walks six miles a day to study at the university. And in the evening, after she has helped get dinner and wash dishes in the house where she works for board and room, she sits down, pale and smiling, and turns off page after page of music, her own composing, for which she has shown unexpected talent. It is not plaintive and sad, her music, like the old Russian folk-songs; it has a touch of rollicking defiance.

It is magnificent; it is terrible. Lots of them have tuberculosis and neurasthenia. Lots of them have died, and lots more are going to die. The youth of a nation does not go through eight years of war and revolution and blockade and famine without paying. Each young life had its struggles with hunger and cold and disease that the youths of our

land never know. . . . They don't take themselves sentimentally, so perhaps we needn't either. They count themselves as a group that will carry on at the cost of many members. They storm the heights of knowledge wastefully, as trenches are taken in battle.

For the heights of knowledge are recognised as the next great battle-front of Russia. They speak of the "front" of Education. They are not cheerful casual college boys; they are an army setting forth to conquer. The greatest stretch of territory on earth lies before them. Its mines and forests and rivers and farms undeveloped challenge them. Its hundred and thirty million peasants and nomad tribes speaking sixty different languages, call to them. . . . They intend that they, the youths of this generation, shall build of this raw land and this backward people the first socialist commonwealth in the world, in advance of any nation.

It is a purpose as terrific as battle, demanding the same disciplined yet reckless valour. They cannot wait, for Russia cannot wait. They intend to hurry history.

XII

FORÇES IN CONFLICT

A YEAR ago last summer I sat with a group of Russian friends on the porch of a little summer cottage thirty miles from Moscow. They were "responsible workers" who had gone down to the country for the week-end to rest,—a teacher, the manager of a publishing house, and the head of a correspondence school.

Sweeping downward from the cottage were flourishing fields of rye, the rye which they all hailed as "Comrade Harvest who comes to save us." On the heights across the valley was a school, organised on an estate that once was used for relaxation and experiment by a seller of drugs in Moscow. Now it teaches a hundred young men and women the growing of drugs; they were almost ready to graduate their first class, and send it out through the provinces to organise similar farms to raise for Russia the needed drugs which failed so sorely during the blockade. The school is largely self-supporting from the plants it produces.

It was a scene of peace and contentment, but based on very simple living. Food was not yet plentiful; the harvest was still before us, not yet realised. In the morning we picked wild strawberries on the upland and in the afternoon we ate them with tea from

the samovar and black bread from Moscow, with the luxury of butter and honey from the nearby school. Then suddenly I threw a bomb into the discussion of plants and bee-raising. "If you let in American capital, as you all want to, won't it strangle your new-born communism before it grows up?"

The discussion lasted for hours. It resumed after supper; it resumed on the train to town. For this was the vital question for Russia's future. "Where is the new economic policy leading, towards capitalism or communism?" And a secondary question, but one of great importance: "What shall be our relations with America?"

They were not talking of political recognition; they were little concerned with what happens at Washington. They were thinking of economic interpenetration. For Russia desires economic contact with America more than with any other nation. America is to her the ideal of efficiency. Every factory dreams of "American machinery and methods"; every government department wants an "American office system." It is not primarily trade that she expects from America, for the two great nations produce largely the same products. She wants investment of American capital and American organisation of industry.

In the end they said to me, laughing: "We have no communism yet. We will get it out of the pockets of your American capitalists. Where else but in America have you the real bases of communism?"

I stared at them in astonishment and they laughed again. "We don't mean that you have the will to

communism in America. Nor that you are going to have communism soon there; certainly not. But —you have the only basis on which communism can be built—machine industry, standardisation of products, speed. You have the communist operation of industry,—that is to say, your industry is operated in common by large masses of interdependent workers. But you have not the communist control of industry;—those workers have nothing to say about the product they make or the jobs that determine their lives.

"Your operation of industry,—that is what we want in Russia. We are a backward people. Our industry and agriculture are primitive. But we have the will to communism which you have not. We have workers awakened by the Revolution which you have not.

"We do not wish to get our development slowly with the nations of Europe. We want to buy it quickly, where we can get the best. Where else is that but America? We want your organisation of industry and your mass production. We will pay high for these things."

"But our organisation of industry is the highest advance of capitalism," I said, puzzled.

"How else," they smiled, "than on the highest advance of capitalism can communism ever be built? You have perfected the machinery and organisation of production; but you let them be controlled in the interests of a few. We shall control them in the interests of all the workers."

"Will you be able to do this?" I asked. "Do

you know how strong these capitalists are? If Rockefeller leases a section of your oil lands, how much communism will he allow near him? Do you know the means of control as these men do? Do you know how the money influence can penetrate into government, and into the subtle influences of all men's thought and desire?"

"We must see that the Communist Party remains a party of workers," he answered, "and clean out bureaucrats and white collar men."

It seemed to me a totally irrelevant answer. "Can't they buy up your officials?" I asked, "as Big Business has often done in every land in the world?"

"No individual official has privileges to sell," they answered, "unless they are confirmed by the highest power in the State, which is under the control of the Party."

"Can't they corrupt a majority of these high bodies? I know these men have been tested by prison and death. But Big Business has done that, in every government."

"These men can all be transferred by the Party, or shot for graft, which in such high Communists would be treason," they answered. "Our discipline is so rigid that their wage and income is known; ill-gotten gains could not be long concealed."

"Can't they subtly influence whole groups of leaders by power and place, as we see so often happen? So that these leaders use personal prestige to keep in office, yet gradually lower their standards to admit personal wealth and consequent corruption? We are talking of money on a large scale, such as has handled

easily the governments of backward lands, money which may even come in the form of development."

"That is why," they said, "we must keep our Party a party of workers, never dominated by bureaucrats and officials. The interests of a permanent government official might in time become the same as the interests of a foreign capitalist. But the interests of the workers of Russia,—never. Their present interest lies in rapid development and suggests a partnership with foreign capital to secure it. But their interest will never lie in giving ultimate control to private capital. The workers of Russia will never sell out; as long as we keep our Party disciplined and clean, we are safe."

"But cannot this little group be completely overwhelmed by the forces of world capital?"

This led to a discussion of the resources of both sides, the external position of Russia, the awakening of Asia, the breakdown of Europe, the psychological influences operating under the new economic policy.

Externally, Russia has grown every year stronger since the Revolution. She has reached the Pacific again with the departure of the Japanese from Vladivostok. Every day strengthens her influence among the exploited nations of Asia. Towards Europe and Western Capitalism, her position has grown steadily stronger. Each year she has offered less as a price for recognition. Each year she has made more favourable trade agreements.

We passed to the internal conditions of Russia. The state ownership of land, of railroads, of indus-

tries that are basic, of banks and foreign commerce. "We ourselves determine what terms we will sign in concessions," they said. "Profit we will grant, but not perpetual ownership of our resources. If foreign capital fulfills these terms, it can make money. If it evades the terms agreed on, and tries to seize what we have not granted, the power of the State is in our hands to enforce our law."

"But cannot the whole mind of your people be affected? Already among many of them the desire for profit is taking the place of state service. Already there are gorgeous banquets of profiteers, and luxurious apartments which the mass of the workers cannot dream of? Will not the wish for these things gradually affect your whole population, so that each man tries to advance at the expense of the others?"

"Yes," they said, "there is that danger. Every man wants the good things of life, and ought to want them. But which do your men in America want most with their money,—luxury or power?"

"They want both, of course," I considered, "but the strong men, the organisers of big industries, prefer power to luxury. It is the weakened second generation that spends time on gilded pleasures. The strong men have no time for such childishness; their joy is in managing the great forces of industry."

"With you in America," they said, "the path to luxury and to power is the same. Money is the gate to all that a man desires,—to comfort, prestige, social prominence, even to intellectual oppor-

tunity. Only an altruistic fool in America would fail to want personal wealth.

"We have organised things differently in Russia. The private capitalist may buy luxury with his money, but he shuts himself off from power. Our universities, our social judgments are prejudiced against him. He has no voice in government. Even the rent of his apartment is decided by a committee of poorly paid workers. He has no social standing.

"The men, on the other hand, who put their energy into building up state industry, may rise very fast to power, if they have ability; for we are short of trained men. They can become presidents of banks or managers of oil districts or organisers of railroads. They get, in that case, very little money; but this does not cause them to lose social prestige. On the contrary, they are the big men of Russia, whose ideas are discussed in the newspapers, and who plan with their fellows the development of a vast Republic of free workers, from the Baltic to the Pacific, from the Arctic Ocean to the warm waters of the south. They even have in mind the dream of World Revolution, in which all countries will some day follow what they have begun, and all history will look back on them as founders of a new epoch. Which, under these conditions, would your young men choose?"

"Any man whose work is worth having," I said, "would choose the building of such a Republic."

"No," they answered. "There will be plenty choosing luxury and personal comfort, and their work also is worth having. These men will do the

petty trading and the development of little industries, filling in the gaps between the great State industries, stimulated by the hope of quick turnover and profits. They will make profits and enjoy ease. But they are not the kind of men who do big things."

I was still confused. "But may not all these things be reversed," I asked, "so that in the end money buys both luxury and power as in America?"

"For that," they said, "we hold the press and the schools and many other weapons."

The press and the schools,—these are no mean weapons. There are in Russia no advertisements urging young men to impose their "power of will" on others, for the sake of their own desires. There are no short stories preaching the gospel of bluff. There are many daily papers, with a wide variety of political and economic news from all parts of the world; there are hot criticisms of the government, and discussions of art. But there is no fashion page, no spectacular divorce-suits, no scandals about picturesque rich men in the papers,—unless sometimes an announcement of the number of cafés closed in a raid for vodka. There is nothing in the press to make anyone wish riches; the butt of the comic papers is the private profiteer.

The educational system is also a weapon, state-planned, to make the next generation efficient in serving the people. In the earliest grades they exalt labour and community service. In the children's homes they are taught, first of all, to share equally with the others. The higher chances of learning and technical training are given by preference to

young people chosen by trade unions or government departments or the communist party itself; the whole atmosphere of these institutions scorns private greed and exalts public service.

"These are the weapons we have," they said. "The power of the State is in our hands, and the lands, and the national resources, and the basic industries, and also the press and the schools. Our task is a double one: to develop the resources of the nation as rapidly as we may, in the interests of all the people. And at the same time to train a new generation in technical knowledge and in the habits of co-operation, fit to manage our resources better than we can do, fit to build a co-operative commonwealth which we cannot build, because we lack both the large scale industry and the necessary habits of mind.

"The technical knowledge,—the large scale industry,—these we want from America. If your capitalists bring us these, we will pay them well, and let them go home with their gains. The final purpose, —we ourselves will furnish. It is of course not certain that we can do this; nothing in the world is certain. But we know the dangers; we are organised to do it."

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So they were planning a year and a half ago in Moscow, and for a year and a half, as I went up and down Russia, I found that everywhere the Communists understood this plan. The Communists charged with improving organisation in the coal mines, thought of all technical advance as a step

towards communism. The men who were slowly bringing a little order out of chaos, in textile mill, in finance, in house repair, in locomotive building, in transport, believed that the Party would use their new achievement towards its plan. The men and women who were battling to secure pencils and paper for impoverished schools had not lost sight of the ultimate end of education,—to train citizens who might build a co-operative commonwealth.

And now, as I leave for America, the land of my own people for three hundred years, already I can look back over the past two years in Russia, and count many steps in the building.

When I went to the far north a year ago, to visit the mica mines of Karelia, I found a little group of half a dozen men struggling to open a new state industry. Their bookkeeping did not tally; their supplies were unaccounted for; their bookkeeper was assigned to wandering jobs up and down the coast, and could not tell me what he had received or what he had given out or to whom. They were selling quartz and feldspar to Petrograd on such a highly protected market that they charged many times the cost of the same material in New York. I said: "These are heroic people, but their industry is on an utterly unsound foundation." . . . Now, after a year, I learn that they borrowed a million gold roubles from Moscow, organised their mica and feldspar and quartz more efficiently, and have already within a year paid back the loan of that million.

A year ago they were boasting that the State Bank,

starting with ten million dollars' worth of paper money, had achieved a capital of twenty million in gold. Now they are issuing chervonetz to the amount of one hundred and twenty million, all properly covered. A year ago they were proud of five hundred new locomotives which had begun to restore transport. Now they have two thousand new locomotives, of which fifteen hundred are in reserve.

Two years ago they had the greatest famine of history; last fall they exported over three million tons of grain. Two years ago there were no exports at all; now they have again reached one-third of prewar export, and even achieved, last year, a favourable balance of trade, exporting ninety million gold roubles more of goods than they purchased abroad. In Moscow thirty-five kilometres of new street-car line has been built out of street-car earnings; every building in Moscow begun before the war and interrupted by eight years of upheaval, is now either finished or under contract.

Russia goes steadily forward, for she has a rich country, economically self-sufficient. And Russia has been through bankruptcy; she admits no debt to the past. She has the disadvantages of a bankrupt; she finds it hard to get credit. But she also has his advantages, that what she now produces, she can keep. She alone in Europe has broken with the past and based her plans on the future.

In Russia they have started with wrecked buildings; but they owe no rent to any landlords. They began with ruined railroads and war-devastated fields, but they owe no mortgages or interest. They

start with bare hands on bare earth, but what they raise is their own. These facts lie behind all Russia's discussions with the rest of Europe. Not lightly, nor without compensating advantages in credits, will Russia give up her immunity from debt. She has before her the sight of Germany, and is in no haste to follow.

Germany has skilled workmen, a tradition of honesty in public office, the most orderly, thrifty and industrious people in the world. Yet she slips steadily down into ruin, dragging Europe with her. She has no strength to save herself, being tangled in a net of war obligations which cannot be untied; which may, perhaps, be cut some day, if she has *anything sharp enough to cut it.*

Russia has *inefficient* workmen, traditions of graft and mismanaged industry, a mediæval system of agriculture, and a war which lasted twice as long as Germany's war. But the day after the wrecking of war ended, the energies of peace began. For nowhere in Russia was any payment to be made to the past.

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I have seen in these two years a many-sided conflict. I have seen graft honey-combing whole departments. On the Murmansk line most of the sleeping compartments were pre-empted by train officials, who exacted little bribes in addition to the regular fare, before they surrendered them. In the transport of goods from textile towns to Moscow, the way was sprinkled with little tips to station officials "for writing the papers on time," or "for NOT de-

taching the car from the train." Private merchants were handing money to workers in the Housing Department, to secure favoured locations quickly.

And again I have seen sudden announcements in the papers that such and such officials had been at last caught red-handed in graft and were being brought to trial. I have read of sentences of imprisonment for minor graft, and even of death sentences for high officials who persistently undermined the state by this corruption. I have gone back a year later and seen new men in the offices.

During these two years I have seen certain small officials install themselves comfortably, and entrench themselves in bureaucratic methods. And I have also seen how the Control Committee of the Party, organised a year ago on a suggestion of Lenin, for reorganising the state apparatus, has reached out and taken officials from Moscow, and sent them out to the provinces, for no other reason than that they were living "too much like bourgeois," and getting out of touch with the common people.

So the struggle goes on; such are the forces in conflict.

Once before, a hundred and twenty-five years ago, there was a War for Independence which we called the American Revolution. Before the echoes of it died completely away, through the decades that followed, the western hemisphere was set free from the dominance of Europe's imperialism. That was a by-product merely of our separation from England. The Russian Revolution is a much vaster

thing. What effect will it have in the freeing of Asia from foreign domination,—as one of the by-products of its struggle? That is another one of the energies unloosed by Russia which will play its part in the conflict.

America and Russia,—these two great countries have the main world tasks in the next generation. They are so much alike, and yet so different; each has what the other lacks.

America also began with vast lands of great richness. She drew to herself because of these opportunities the most venturesome and energetic sons of earth. From their effort, on the large scale made possible by her untouched resources, she developed large scale production and efficient operation as has no other nation. Her sons go back to the lands that sent them,—carrying speed, short-cuts and the sense of organisation.

America began her vast expansion with definite theories of liberty and democracy. She believed in the right of each man to seize for himself freely the resources of nature, and to compete with others to keep what he found. It was the belief in those times that so might be secured the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

A hundred years went by. History has a way of reshaping our plans. The westward sweep of a great people was not without result. Something came into the world because of America. Not the simple, democratic dream of our fathers, based on access of every man to the resources of nature. But a vast, complex industrial civilisation, the most en-

ergetic and efficient on earth. Only when I look back at America from the disorganisation of Europe,—at our compact, neat offices, our labour-saving bungalows, our easy-running machinery of industry and life,—do I realise what America adds to mankind's chances of comfort. Not the ultimate gift of happiness to man, but one more weapon to achieve it,—the weapon of swift production and efficient organisation, useful for good or for ill, but a new power in the world.

Now, more than a hundred years after, Russia starts also on a vast expansion, with fresh energies unleashed by Revolution, over the last unoccupied lands of the world. Resources greater even than America's were, in forests and mines and rich black soil. She appreciates American methods as no other nation in Europe appreciates them; for she also has large lands undeveloped, and space for great organisation. She sees clearly in American methods the means she needs toward the future she desires. The other nations of Europe are entangled in conflict and undecided in direction; but Russia is ready to build. She knows what she wants and why.

She starts, not as America did, on the belief in individual access to the wealth of nature, but on the principle of collective ownership of all natural resources, and collective operation as fast as she can organise it. She believes that common planning and common ownership is the road to the greatest justice and the happiness of all.

What will fifty years show? Or a hundred? What unexpected pitfalls await her around the turns

of the decades? Surely the pioneers of America did not expect the America of to-day, either in its greatness or in its disillusions. What unexpected disillusions await the next generations in Russia, that no one now can foresee? Some disillusions there will be always. No communism in daily struggle, or in achievement, can be quite the same that it seemed in its first dream. Better perhaps, or worse,—but certainly different.

There is one thing Russia has already, and it is something new in history. She has a large and organised Party of Workers, with control of vast resources, planning their future social order day by day. Working it out in detail by discussion and action. She has behind this group the Young Communist League, and behind them the Young Pioneers, ready to be absorbed into the planning. As long as this group lasts and maintains its character, whatever new things await around the turns of the road will find it ready,—to advance, to retreat, to move sideways, to work the new event into their plan.

This is Common Consciousness in action, the first time we have seen it. We see its awkward beginnings, but it may be as great in its effect on evolution as was the change from animal to man. That earlier change meant that at last there was a creature who could plan for a future, refusing present impulse for something he wanted later, viewing life as a whole and not as a series of disjointed moments. Individual man does it yet very poorly, after the lapse of ages; but the fact that he does it at all has enabled him to conquer the world.

Now at last is also a social and economic organism which can plan its own future, viewing life as a co-operative whole and not as a series of individuals competing. The thing that impresses me most about the Communists in Russia is not their self-sacrifice, but the ease with which they take the state-wide point of view, unconscious of self-sacrifice. They do not think it strange that they should put their whole lives at the disposal of a Party, in plans for a future they will never live to see. They do not think it heroic any more than a man who refuses an alcoholic debauch because he has work he prefers to accomplish, prides himself on unusual virtue. Such a man thinks not that he is heroic, but that he is sensible. The Communists I meet who are giving their lives for the Revolution, think not that they are heroic, but that they are doing the sensible social thing.

This is something really new. There have been many revolutions; there have been many nations that have acted and felt as a unit under transient emotions of wartime. But never has a great society in control of a nation, organised persistently and with common mind, the energies of peace.

Such a Common Consciousness, in control of power and working out a common goal,—this is all we shall see of Communism in our generation. But who, ten years ago, could have hoped to see so much?

THE END